THE SPLENDID ADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN

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THE SPLENDID ADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN.

AND OTHER ERRATIC ESSAYS.

BY CHARLES J. DUNPHIE.

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"No matter in the world is so proper to write with as wildfire."—*Addison.*

"Misce stultitiam consiliis brevem."—*Horace.*

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TO

JOHN S. CLARKE.

IN SINCERE THOUGH INADEQUATE TESTIMONY

OF

MY AFFECTION FOR HIM AS A FRIEND

AND

MY ADMIRATION FOR HIM AS AN ARTIST

I INSCRIBE THIS VOLUME,

WITH THE WARMEST FEELINGS OF REGARD AND A

PLEASURE ALLOYED ONLY WITH REGRET

THAT THE OFFERING IS NOT LESS UNWORTHY

OF

HIS ACCEPTANCE.

TO THE READER.

THE following Essays having been originally published under a *nom de plume*, the Reader is courteously entreated to attribute the egotism of which they may bear too frequent traces, not to the Author, but to the ideal personage whom he represented.

It may not be inexpedient to state that though some of the Essays affect a thoughtful or critical tone, and are therefore meant to be read in a serious spirit, many more of them begin where Common Sense leaves off. Incredible as it may appear on perusal, it is not the less true that the articles of this latter class were intended to be amusing; that they should have been so designed, seeing how they have eventuated, is, perhaps, the drollest thing about them. They were written upon the Horatian principle, *dulce est desipere in loco;* and Addison's maxim, "No matter in the world is so proper to write with as wildfire," was adopted throughout, though probably in a sense, as with a result, hardly within the contemplation of that celebrated author.

It now and then happened to the present writer that his pen ran away with him. He meekly suggests that on such occasions Messrs. Gillott, of Birmingham, who created the unmanageable implement, should be held responsible for its escapades.

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ERRATIC ESSAYS.

THE SPLENDID ADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN.

IT has been said that lookers-on know more about a battle than do the soldiers engaged in the strife. With parity of reasoning, it may be argued that in very right of his manhood, a man is better qualified than a woman to pronounce an opinion upon the advantages specially appertaining to the female sex. Being a man, I deem myself *ipso facto* qualified to discourse authoritatively upon the gain and glory of being a woman. Before doing so, however, I must say a word in explanation of my motive, lest, peradventure, it should be misunderstood by those of whose good report in my regard I would on no account be unmindful. Let it not be supposed that I am envious of the splendid privileges enjoyed by the ladies, or would abridge their priceless prerogatives. Perish the ignoble thought! I would enlarge those privileges and multiply those prerogatives one hundred-fold, were it possible to do so. All I propose is, to show how much more enviable than the lot of man is that of woman, and in one emphatic word, to prove that the next dearest blessing that can befall a human being, after not having been born at all, is to have been born a woman.

The physical advantages of being a woman are many and various. The gift of Beauty, with all its concomitant delights, belongs to woman, and to her alone. There never was, and it may be safely predicted that there never will be, on earth any such creature as an ugly woman. Nobody ever heard of such a phenomenon. To be a woman is to be beautiful, and so far is she from diminishing in personal attraction, that we are every day assured upon the most disinterested authority that "loveliness is on the increase." It stands to reason that it must be so, for women are on the increase; and woman and loveliness are convertible terms. How sweetly and how truly sings Otway!—

> "Oh woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
> To temper man; we had been brutes without you.
> Angels are painted fair, to look like you;
> There's in you all that we believe of heaven,—
> Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
> Eternal joy, and everlasting love."

These are my sentiments, if not exactly my words. I have travelled in many lands and mingled with all classes, but I have never yet seen either an ugly woman or a handsome man. One man may possibly be a shade —just a shade—less hideous than another, but no man makes a nearer approach to beauty than that. All men are of necessity ill-shaped and ill-favored, whereas all women are, by a law no less inflexible, symmetrical in form and fair to look upon. Some of them, doubtless, are more symmetrical and fairer than others, but all are symmetrical and fair. When a sword is put into a man's hand, and he is told to go forth and fly at some other man's throat, for the dear sake of "England, home, and *beauty*," no one is such a fool as to imagine that he is

thereby enjoined to do battle for his own miserable sex. Nothing of the kind. England is a lady. Look at her figure on our coins. Who ever saw Britannia in trowsers and a chimney-pot? "Home," there is none without a woman. "Beauty" merely means the sex female. Not alone are women beautiful themselves, but they have an instinctive love of the beautiful wherever it is to be found. "Women," observes a lady, "have a much nicer sense of the beautiful than men. They are by far the safer umpires in the matters of propriety and grace. A mere school-girl will be thinking and writing about the beauty of birds and flowers, while her brother is robbing the nests and destroying the roses." Then, again, consider the physical bother and irritation you escape by the simple expedient of being a woman. A man either wears a beard, in which case he must brush, comb, and oil it, at a great cost of time and trouble daily, or he wears none, in which event he has to submit himself once every four-and-twenty hours to the horrible operation of shaving. No woman has to suffer either of these vile alternatives. A lady may sip soup with a dainty grace, whereas a gentleman, do what he may, is compromised in the most distressing manner by his mustache. Furthermore, Nature, who has given to woman the prize of Beauty, and withheld from her the penalty of a beard, has also bestowed upon her length of days. It is notorious that, all the world over, women as a sex live longer than men similarly classed. Extreme old age is rarely, very rarely attained by men, whereas you can hardly take up a newspaper without finding mention of some one lady who is well on for her hundredth year, or some other lady who has just died at that mature age. Moreover, in this country, at all

events, women are numerically immensely in excess of men, and so have all the power and prestige of majority. So that, view it as we may, whether with reference to beauty of feature, grace of form, length of life, or numerical ascendancy, the advantage is still with women.

But if the physical advantages of being a woman are great, who can estimate the social at their due value? *Pas aux dames!* make way for the ladies! is the law of civilized society, from the equator to either pole. "Will any gentleman oblige a lady?" asks the omnibus-conductor, in his blandest of tones; and no sooner said than done. Out rushes a gentleman in soaking rain and cutting blasts, to oblige a lady (that is to say, to save her the expense of a sixpenny cab), whom he had never seen before, and will probably never see again. Who ever yet heard of a lady getting out to oblige a gentleman? The notion is monstrous. The man who would suggest such a thing would deserve to he hanged on the nearest lamp-post. Every man who has received a salute from a lady takes off his hat to her. Who takes off his hat to a man? Men glare or scowl, the one at the other, or at best exchange contemptuous nods, but as for lifting their hats—unless indeed one of the parties should happen to be the Speaker of the House of Commons—such a thing is unheard of among equals. If a man were to take off his hat to me, I should feel disposed to punch his head, concluding that he meant mockery, as naughty street-boys sometimes "take a sight" at one another. But men were only made to do homage to women. Everywhere and always the same golden rule obtains. For whom are the tit-bits reserved at every feast?—who gets sugar and spice and all things

nice?—who is served first, and has the best seat at breakfast, dinner and supper?—who polishes off the Neapolitan ices at opera and play?—woman, woman, lovely woman! Who pays for them? Man, the wretch! Who stands by patiently while they are being consumed?—man, hollow-eyed, famine-stricken man? Who comes in for all the kisses of fortune?—woman; and who for all her kicks? Man, man, ugly man, the most unfortunate of created beings! "The lapse of ages changes all things,—time, language, the earth, the bounds of the sea, the stars of the sky, and everything about, around and underneath man, except man himself, who has always been and always will be an unlucky rascal." So spake Lord Byron, and words of truer wisdom were never spoken. But as for Woman, she is the empress of creation, the world is her garden, and man her menial,—nothing more. Falling an easy victim to her enchantments, man indulges in a little innocent flirtation. He loves and he rides away. Woman brings her action for breach of promise, and gets swingeing damages. Woman loves and *she* rides away. Man brings his action for breach of promise. He is hooted out of court. Woman is privileged to dress in the costliest and most fanciful fashion. Silks, satins, velvets, the most curious fabrics of the loom, feathers, furs, laces, whatsoever things are beauteous, whatsoever things are rare and splendid, are at her disposal, to equip herself out withal, and make her irresistible. Even the innocent little dicky-birds are impressed into her service, and surrender their lives that woman's hat may look the sprucer for their plumage. In her cause the robin red-breast lays down his melodious life; and justly so, since a bird in her hat is worth two in the

bush. The little bow-wow dogs give up their brass collars that they may shine upon her snowy neck. She goeth forth conquering and to conquer. Man—poor devil!—is restricted to the same cut of clothes from generation to generation. What with his odious chimney-pot hat, and his horrid trowsers, and his never-changing coats—always made of the same material, the wool of the congenial sheep—he is a mere collection of cylinders, and his garments seem to be contrived for the express purpose of enhancing his native ugliness and making him still more ridiculous. In all particulars, both ceremonial and sumptuary, he therefore is doomed to ignominious inferiority, and must not dare to emulate the splendor of the angelic sex.

So much for what may be termed "externals," but in affairs of graver import, splendid, indeed, are the advantages of being a woman. Who toils? who suffers all hardships? who endures all inclemencies of weather? who bears the burden and the heat of the day? who the rigor and the darkness of the night? Man,—the unlucky rascal, man. Who is the last to leave the blazing house? Man. Who stands upon the bridge of the sinking ship and goes down with her into the abysses of the ocean, never, never to be seen again? Man; still man. And when war breaks forth, who fights? who bleeds? who dies? Who should it be, but man, the unluckiest of rascals? Meanwhile, woman, bless her sweet heart! remains at her cozy fireside, safe, warm, and comfortable. Thus let it ever be, for our arms should be her protection, and her arms our reward. Only, I want to show what a grand and blessed thing it is to be a woman, and what cause for gratitude that human being has who is thus sublimely privileged. Nor

is it in times of danger alone that she has the advantage. Whether in war or peace, she has still, as the homely phrase goes, "the longer end of the stick." What can be more irksome, duller, more monotonous than the life of a man? What gayer, brighter, more delightful than that of a woman? A man goes out in the morning, and it may be for six, eight, or ten hours afterwards, he is immured within four walls. It signifies nothing by what name you may dignify his prison, whether as study, studio, shop, office, law-chamber, library or counting-house, it is still to all intents and purposes a prison, and his jailer's name is "Business." There he toils and moils all day long, in inexorable captivity. But no sooner has he left his house after breakfast than his wife is at liberty to wander where she pleases. She gives with a sweet smile an order or two to her servants, and for the rest of the day she is queen of herself, that heritage of joy. She sallies forth on her butterfly career to see the shops, to spend her husband's money, to run about upon castors like a table, to visit her friends, and "each change of many-colored life" to view. Moreover, she may let her hair grow to the length of her waist. We must have ours cut once a month. Oh! who would not be a woman.

Yet another privilege belongs to the sex, and to them alone, the priceless privilege of Weeping. When any trial, real or imaginary, arises to warp their temper, they can have "a good cry," and all is over. This celestial solace is denied to man. His heart may be bleeding at every pore. There let it! He must not dare to shed a tear. If he do, the finger of derision is pointed at him, and he never more may call himself a man. "Women," says Saville, "have more strength in their

looks than we have in our laws, and more power by their tears than we have by our arguments." Let the tears but rise to woman's eye, and all is over with "that other animal, man." Be his cause however righteous, he has nothing for it but to lick the dust :—

"Oh! too convincing,—dangerously dear,
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
That weapon of her weakness, she can wield
To save, subdue,—at once her spear and shield.
Avoid it!—Virtue ebbs, and wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!
What lost a world, and made a hero fly?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.

These are but a few of the splendid advantages of being a Woman. The best of everything; their own way; and the last word in every argument, such are the rights of Woman. For my own poor part, I have never ceased to regret that I am not one, and the mother of nine children, to boot.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING UGLY.

IT would largely conduce to the greater comfort of the world that men and women should be brought to understand how preferable is Ugliness to Beauty. The practical and universal recognition of this great fact would destroy self-conceit and its concomitant evils, and disenchant us all of a thousand illusions injurious to our peace of mind. It is quite time that Beauty should be brought to task for her manifold offences against the

welfare of society, and that the claims of Ugliness on the admiration of mankind should be fearlessly set forth. Trace back the history of that unfortunate being Man, from the earliest period to the present hour, and you shall find that in all ages and in all climes he has been tormented and be-fooled by Beauty. In that most perfidious of sirens he has invariably found a pitiless despot, a remorseless enslaver. For Beauty men have again and again disregarded the bonds of kindred, violated the fondest obligations of friendship, and set at naught all laws divine and human. At her bidding they have committed heinous crimes, cherished deadly animosities, and plunged into the most unrighteous wars. In fact, as all geometry may be reduced to a point, even so may all the miseries of life be reduced to Beauty as to their first principle. "What a delightful life we should all have had in the garden of Eden if we had never been born!" exclaimed the O'Finnigan the other day in a transport of philosophy and punch. And so we should. When Adam was a bachelor he had a pleasant time enough of it in the asphodel bowers of Paradise, till in an evil hour he became enamored of Beauty in the form of Eve. So he laid him down to rest—poor wight—and, as has been said all too truly, his first sleep became his last repose. Solomon, reputedly the wisest man the world ever saw, grew infatuate of Beauty, and all his wisdom was of no avail against her enchantments. We know full well how Samson fared at the hands of Dalilah. Troy, the very site whereof has utterly disappeared, might now be a flourishing city, and Greeks and Trojans might be living to this hour in perfect amity had it not been that they all went mad for love of a fair-haired girl named Helen. Orlando lost

his senses for the sake of Angelica; Antony for Cleopatra. Herod, the Tetrarch, went clean out of his wits for a pretty dancing-girl, and the King of Bavaria did the like for Lola Montes. King Richard might possibly have been a prosperous gentleman, though not as straight as a poplar, but that he, too, went daft about Beauty, as he pathetically assured the object of his idolatry—

> "Your beauty was the cause of that effect,
> Your beauty that did haunt me in my sleep."

The ancient philosophers were at great pains to warn their disciples against the cozening devices of Beauty. Aristotle declares that a graceful person is a more powerful recommendation than the best letter that can be written in your favor; so that it comes to this, that an elegant form supersedes the necessity for a good character. Plato desires the possessor of Beauty to consider it as a mere gift of nature and not any perfection of his own; but, inasmuch as no handsome human being of either sex ever so accounted it, Plato might as well have kept his breath to cool his porridge. Socrates calls Beauty "a short-lived tyranny," which it unquestionably is: and Theophrastus denominates it "a silent fraud," because it imposes on us without the help of language. "Beauty," says Lord Bacon, "is as summer fruits which are easy to corrupt and cannot last; and for the most part it makes a dissolute youth and an age a little out of countenance." To understand the utter worthlessness of Beauty we must bear in mind first its capricious and fantastic organ, and secondly the ridiculous brevity of its existence. "Every eye makes its own beauty," says the proverb. This being so it follows

that Beauty is after all no positive entity, no gift or quality capable of demonstration, and easy of reference to the "sensible and tried avouch" of universal vision, but the merest matter of fantasy depending upon the ardor of a man's imagination or possibly the condition of his digestion. So it, doubtless, is in the majority of cases; but even in those instances where it may be admitted to be patent to all beholders, what is its value? To say that Beauty is here to-day and gone to-morrow, were to exaggerate the term of its duration. It is here to-day and gone to-day—"the perfume and suppliance of a minute."

> "Fair is the lily, fair
> The rose, of flowers the eye;
> Both wither in the air—
> Their beauteous colors die."

So it fares with Beauty ever—of all creatures under the sun assuredly the most fallacious and evanescent. And the mischief of it is that, not content with being a sham herself, Beauty has a fatal tendency to make a sham of everybody who has anything to do with her. What women have we not met who would be delightful, but that they are beautiful and *know it!* What men have we not had the misfortune at times to converse with who have been transformed from good fellows into intolerable coxcombs by reason of the adulation which, in consideration of their beauty, they receive at the hands of women! Of all the despicable counterfeits who ever libelled humanity the most despicable is assuredly a ladies' man. Belonging to neither sex, it is the pest and reproach of both. And all because of its beauty. A man has a privilege to be ugly, and though it be true

enough, as Madame de Stael wittily observed to Curran, that "he should not abuse his privilege"—as Curran did most outrageously,—it were better that a man should be ugly as Thersites than that being beautiful as Narcissus he should also be as big a fool. For my own part I am "free to confess"—as they used to say in parliament long ago,—that I am never comfortable in the same room with a Beautiful man. I always feel inclined to punch his head. Such is the demoralizing influence of Beauty, a sorceress who living but for an hour manages to concentrate within that tiny span sins enough for centuries—inveigling all hearts, bamboozling all intellects, and turning all brains "the seamy side without," like the wit of honest Iago.

So much for Beauty; and now for Ugliness. There are two qualities about Ugliness which compel my profound respect. The one is her downright honesty; the other is her adamantine durability. There is no humbug about Ugliness. No! there are no two ways about Ugliness. She provokes no controversy. She is not a matter of taste but of fact. Taste is out of court. Ugliness stands confessed for what she is, and all men are of accord in her regard. Her sheer integrity brooks no equivocation. Ugliness *is* ugly, and there an end. She wears no mask; she sails under no false colors; she presents herself for what she is, and as the jugglers say, "there is no deception." Ugliness is thoroughly respectable, and however she may be disliked she cannot be despised. "Beauty is only skin deep," as all the world knows; but Ugliness goes to the bone. "Handsome is that handsome does" is the consolatory maxim of the ill-favored all the world over, but the Beauty of the beautiful dwells only in fancy. Then, again, look at

the permanence of Ugliness. See how it wears. Part from a beautiful man and go abroad for eight or ten years. Come back at the end of that period, and you will look in vain for his beauty. It has vanished like snow before the sun. But bid an Ugly man good-bye and return to him after the lapse of a like period, and, by the Lord Harry, you'll find him ten times Uglier than you had left him. And so it is with ladies. How often does one hear that most melancholy of all reflections evoked by the sight of a woman once lovely, but whose loveliness is gone never to return: "How pretty she must have been when she was young!" What a sorrowful thought! If she had been ugly *ab initio* nobody would now mourn over the ruin of her beauty. People would say "Bless her heart! she improves in ugliness. I remember her a girl, and she was ordinary enough in all conscience, but now she is a Gorgon." Beauty goes off with youth like the bloom of a plum; but Ugliness endures like the stone. Truest of friends, it abides with its votaries all the days of their lives. There is no need of an unguent to make you ugly for ever. Once Ugly, you grow Uglier and more Ugly to the end of the chapter. And then consider the mental serenity of the Ugly. Of the many happy privileges enjoyed by the plain sisterhood, one of the happiest is the thought that *they*, at all events, are not responsible for the horrid feuds and execrable conflicts by which the peace of the world has been from time to time disturbed. Let the blue-eyed and the golden-tressed look to it; the Ugly have free souls, without fear and without reproach. At *their* doors lies no blood-guiltiness. Who ever yet heard of two friends fighting a duel, much more of two nations going to war, on account of an ugly woman?

The very notion is preposterous. Nor can it be charged against the ill-favored that they are in any degree accountable for the sorrows and solicitudes which are incidental to matrimony. "*Une femme laide est un homme pour moi*"—an ugly woman is a man for me—says Théophile Gautier, and I am altogether of his way of thinking. I had as soon marry the Lord High Chancellor or the Commander of the Forces as an Ugly woman. It is too bad that men should have this prejudice; but they have, and there is no arguing against it. Yet some of the pleasantest people I have ever known, both men and women, have been and are as Ugly as if they had been bespoken. They know no change. It is a thing of Ugliness, not of Beauty, that is a joy forever. The very imputation of Ugliness has in it a charm which enthralls the imagination. Thus Lord Byron tells us that the only way to bring an exorbitant hackney-coachman to his senses is to look at him steadily between the eyes, and after carefully perusing his features to say, "Well! you *are* the Ugliest man that ever trod the earth." Cabby appreciates the compliment, owns the soft impeachment, and is content with his fare. Depend upon it *to kalon* is the one thing wrong in the world. The Ugly alone deserve admiration. One may admire an Ugly woman with such intensity of admiration that one would not dare to marry her. You, dear reader, are beautiful—I know you are; you will acquit me, therefore, of any intention to flatter you when I ask you whether some of the nicest, dearest, best persons you have ever met are not downright ugly? Of course they are! True, I know a man who is as Ugly as sin and not half as pleasant; but then he suffers from bunions, poor fellow, and in any case he is but the excep-

tion that proves the rule. It may be egotistical to say so, doubtless it is; but I have ever loved, and ever shall love, ugly people. Apart from the charms of their conversation, which has nothing of the frivolity that so often disgraces the talk of the Beautiful, I find a strange delight in perusing the features of the Ugly. There is intolerable monotony in a finely chiselled face. Its regularity is irksome to behold. The Ugly—and they alone—are picturesque. Irregularity is to their lineaments what undulation is to a landscape, the key to that variety of outline which is all-essential to artistic effect. A fellow on whom Nature has graciously bestowed a turn-up nose bears about him the physical emblem of disdain, and always seems to be treating the world with the scorn and contempt of which the world is richly deserving. Beetle eyebrows call to mind a glossy, amiable insect; high cheek bones have a bold, majestic, cliff-like look; a low forehead bespeaks the gentle virtue of humility; and a mouth that is like unto an oven resembles a very good thing. And then for eyes—why should eyes be fellows? Surely it is much more useful as well as ornamental that one eye should look to the west, the other to the east. I love a man with a squint—

> "If ancient poets Argus prize,
> Who boasted of a hundred eyes;
> Sure, greater praise to him is due
> Who sees a hundred ways with two."

As for figure, why should the human form be straight. Any poker may be straight. The line of beauty is a curve. Moreover, a friend *in-kneed* is a friend indeed! Taking into consideration this and many kindred facts, I am clearly of opinion that the time is come for reviv-

ing Sir Richard Steel's "Ugly Club"—that famous fraternity which was founded upon the principle that no one should be admitted to membership, "without a visible queerity in his aspect, or a peculiar cast of countenance, or some personal eccentricity set forth in a table entitled 'The Act of Deformity.'" Such an institution would be of great use in bringing the world to understand the many and admirable advantages of being ugly.

THE INCOMMUNICABILITY OF SORROW.

SORROW is incommunicable. There is something ineffably sorrowful in the thought. The simple fact that we are in sorrow is, of course, easy of communication, but the personal import of that fact is not to be told. No man can make another understand the nature, character, and extent of the sorrow by which he is himself desolated. That is what I mean by the incommunicability of sorrow. You may be grieved to the soul to learn that your friend is in affliction. You may be ready to go through fire and water, so to speak, to rescue him, but as for comprehending the quality of his grief, fathoming its depths, or measuring its poignancy, you might as well undertake to count the stars. Nor is he in any better case towards you. He can no more enter into your tribulation than you into his. Each may see but too plainly that the other suffers, each may sympathize most cordially with the other, but neither can appreciate at the true value of its anguish the grief that wrings the

other's heart. An old French proverb puts the question in the clearest possible light,—"*Si vous voulez pleurer mes malheurs, prenez mes yeux :*" "If you would weep my sorrows, you must take my eyes." Just so. It will not do for you to put yourself in my place. You must discard your own identity and assume mine. To enter into my feelings, you must take upon you my being. Nothing short of an interchange of natures can qualify you to understand my sorrows, or me to understand yours ; and any such interchange being impossible, our sorrows are incommunicable. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness," wrote Solomon, the son of David ; and what man or woman is there whose own experience does not bear witness to the truth of the assertion ? "One can never be the judge of another's grief," says Châteaubriand, "for that which is a sorrow to one, to another is joy. Let us not dispute with any one concerning the reality of his suffering ; it is with sorrows as with countries,—each man has his own."

Sorrow is of general prevalence, but of particular operation. Every man's griefs are so interwoven with his personal history as to have become part of himself. He and they may not be sundered. Take, for example, the supremest of all sorrows, that which we endure in the loss of those we love. Let me put the cruel hypothesis that you have lost a child. Your friend to whom you impart the fact may have passed through the same ordeal. He, too, may have wept over the grave of a son or of a daughter. His heart bleeds for you, because of your common calamity, yet is he unable to understand the special force and peculiar poignancy of your bereavement. That is known to you, and to you alone of all the world. The very name of your Beloved strikes

chords of feeling to him unknown, evokes memories to which he is a stranger, elicits associations which to him are mysteries. A trick of feature, a tone of the voice, a resemblance in manner, a song, which your Loved one delighted to sing, a place which he or she was wont to visit, the merest trifle of every-day life, will recall vanished scenes to you alone intelligible, and awaken in your heart emotions which no other heart than yours can share or comprehend. "You are as fond of grief as of your child," says King Philip to Queen Constance, bewailing her pretty Arthur. How eloquent is the reply of the broken-hearted mother!—

> "Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
> Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
> Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
> Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form.
> Then have I reason to be fond of grief.
> Fare you well!"

And so it is with all kinds of sorrow. They appeal to reminiscences with which we alone are familiar; they have darkened prospects which we alone delighted to contemplate; they have killed hopes which we alone cherished; they have cast shadows upon a path which we alone must traverse. Therefore is our sorrow incommunicable: "*Si vous voulez pleurer mes malheurs, prenez mes yeux.*"

In her charming little book, the *Life of Isaac Hopper*, Maria Childs makes some reflections which will come home to all who have ever suffered. "Who does not know that all the sternest conflicts of life can never be recorded? Every human soul must walk alone through the darkest and most dangerous paths of its pilgrimage

—absolutely alone with God. Much from which we suffer most acutely could never be revealed to others; still more could never be understood, if it were revealed; and still more ought never to be repeated, if it could be understood." Somewhat similar in sentiment are the meditations of a thoughtful German writer, whose words may be translated thus:—"It is not that which is apparent, not that which may be known and told, which makes up the bitterest portion of human suffering, which plants the deepest furrow on the brow and sprinkles the hair with its earliest grey! They are the griefs which lie fathom-deep in the soul, and never pass the lip; those which devour the heart in secret, and which send their victim into public with the wild laugh and troubled eye; those which spring from crushed affections and annihilated hopes; from remembrance, and remorse, and despair; from the misconduct or neglect of those we love; from changes in others; from changes in ourselves." Nor is it alone the guilty, haunted by the visions of their misdeeds, like Orestes by the Furies, or Richard by the Phantoms, who have cause for dejection. An incommunicable sorrow may have been generated by folly or obduracy as surely as by sin. The man who has found out too late that he married the wrong woman; the woman who has made the like discovery in the case of a man; the men and women who have missed their paths in life, or lost their chances, or abused their privileges, or, to use a homely phrase, "played their cards badly,"—all these people have occasions of distress beyond the ken of the outer world. So true is it, that "our acts our angels are, or good or ill, our fatal shadows that walk by us still." And the saddest thought of all is, that the most trivial circumstances will suffice to awaken the most tragical reminiscences:—

"For ever and anon of griefs subdued,
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued,
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound."

Then, again, there is the man who, though he works hard and does his best, can never give satisfaction to those whom he loves and in whose cause he toils. Who shall fathom the sorrow of such a wretch? Who shall express his sense of humiliation?

How tender, how melodious, how full of melancholy eloquence are these familiar lines!—

"I have a silent sorrow here,
Which never will depart;
It heaves no sigh, it sheds no tear,
But—it consumes my heart."

All forms of tribulation incidental to humanity, whether caused by the death of those whose life is essential to our happiness, or by illness, or by the loss of fortune, or by the darkening of fair fame, or by the overflow of cherished projects, or by whatsoever other malign influence, bring with them a certain incommunicable anguish which is, in fact, the cross that every man and woman is appointed to carry, and which can be laid down only at the grave. In the estrangement of old friends there lurks a sorrow which, being incapable of impartment, is past all surgery. A friend for whom you would willingly lay down your life may not have

done you any deliberate wrong or wilful injury ; he would probably shrink with horror from the very thought of such a thing ; but he may none the less have destroyed your peace and ruined your happiness by his perverse conduct, his maddening inconsistency, or his ill-advised interference in your affairs. To make him comprehend the mischief he has wrought is out of the question. Conscious of the purity of his motives, he forgets what tragedies have sprung from good intentions, and he ignores the disastrous consequences of his actions. He cannot, for the life of him, weep over the misery he has caused, because he cannot take your eyes. You love him dearly, but you and he cannot get on together. The plague of Babel is upon you both, and neither can understand the other. In no case more poignantly than in this do we feel the incommunicability of sorrow : "*Si vous voulez pleurer mes malheurs, prenez mes yeux.*" Alas, my heart ! It is not to be done.

Though a thousand friends were grouped around the bed of a dying man, still must he die alone. Unaccompanied by any one of those who view with anguish the ebbing of the tide of life must he descend into the valley of the shadow of death. And as it will be in death, so also is it in life. Through the most momentous eras of our earthly career, every man and woman of us must walk, not, it may be, uncared for, nor unloved, but alone, all alone. The sense of solitude inspired by this thought is indeed saddening ; yet it may be turned to profitable account. Of what avail is it to attempt to explain that which is in its very nature inexplicable ? What good end is to be attained by harassing our friends with the recital of griefs which, however they may commiserate, they cannot comprehend ? The selfishness of

such a proceeding is apparent at a glance. There is no patent of affliction. Every man has sorrows enough of his own, without being saddled with those of his friends as well. Every man must carry his own cross. To seek to shift it upon other shoulders were as futile as unmanly. "Bear ye one another's burdens." Yes, by all means, in the sense of giving our help and sympathy to all who are in affliction, but not in the hopeless sense of torturing others with a tale of woe intelligible only to ourselves. "We must instruct our sorrows to be proud." Let us cull comfort, if not from the sublime precepts of Christianity, at all events from the benign philosophy of the Ancients. Come what may, never forget this august maxim, "*Qui silenter pătitur nullo ille spernitur deo;*" "He who suffers in silence is not disdained by any god."

THE DIGNITY AND DELIGHT OF IGNORANCE.

POETS and speakers, more or less melodious and eloquent, have not been wanting to sound the praises of Imagination, of Memory, and of Hope. How strange it is—how very strange—that no one should ever have attempted to celebrate the dignity and delight of Ignorance! What nobler theme than this could possibly inspire the harp of the lyrist, the pen of the essayist, or the tongue of the orator? Distrustful of my own ability, however richly endowed with Ignorance, to rise to the grandeur of the "topic," I should hesitate

to approach it, but that a strong sense of duty impels me to do my best to supply what must be universally regarded as a desideratum in literature. I propose, therefore, to devote this essay to a consideration of the claims of Ignorance upon the admiration and gratitude of mankind. I have already unmasked Beauty, exposing her to the world in her true colors as the basest of sirens, the most perfidious of sorceresses. Come for a ramble with me to-day, dear reader mine, and I hope to conduct you safely to a happy destination—the profound conviction that Knowledge ranks next after Beauty in the order of mischief, sharing with her the bad distinction of pre-eminent hostility to the peace and happiness of the human race. Bear with me for a while and you shall be proud to acknowledge that the amount of man's ignorance is the measure of his felicity. "*Non meus hic sermo.*" While disclaiming any intention to venture upon the shoreless sea of dogmatic theology, I may be permitted to remind you of what all Christians are of accord in admitting, let their differences on other points be what they may—namely, that we should all be now leading joyous and sinless lives in the amaranthine groves of Paradise had it not been that Adam, at the instigation of his wife, ate in an evil hour of the tree of knowledge. Conscious of this fact and pathetically observant of its influence on the destiny of man, Solomon, the son of David, set his hand to this memorable declaration, "In the multitude of wisdom is grief, and he that increaseth wisdom increaseth sorrow." On this immortal maxim I take my stand as on a rock, defying contradiction and laughing my assailants to scorn. It was quite in the spirit of Solomon's benignant philosophy that Matthew Prior penned his verse, witty as musical :—

"If we see right we see our woes,
Then what avails it to have eyes?
From ignorance our comfort flows,
The only wretched are the wise."

Yes. Solomon was right; so was Prior; so, not to speak it profanely, am I. Don't be run away with by your feelings. View the question dispassionately, and regarding it honestly from what point you may, you will still be driven in candor to the conclusion that Beauty and Knowledge are man's direst foes, Ugliness and Ignorance his truest friends. The next best thing to being ugly is to be ignorant. Be both if you can; but that were more easily said than done. The man who is at once ugly and ignorant—and such a man have I met ere now—may be said to have reached the very acme of human felicity; but such a combination of good luck is rare, indeed. He who possesses it may account himself the prime favorite of fortune. "*Is deis, is superis, proximus est.*" Ugliness is a gift—a special blessing inherited from Nature, not to be acquired by art. The beauty of ignorance is that it is within the reach of every one. Not everybody can be ugly, but any one can be ignorant. What a blessed thought! Then let us be ignorant; as we value our happiness, let us be ignorant! Is it not written, "in the multitude of wisdom is grief, and he that increaseth wisdom increaseth sorrow?" and does not every day's experience attest the truth of the saying, "*Utinam ne scirem literas?*" "Oh! that I had never known my letters," exclaimed the unhappy Abbé Lamennais; and what man of sense is there who would not echo that sentiment? Forgery would have been unknown, and Dr. Dodd, instead of being hanged at Newgate, would have died in his bed

had he not learned to write. "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise," sang Gray, the poet; and where in this weary world is ignorance *not* bliss? where is it *not* folly to be wise? One of the happiest men I have ever known is one solid mass of ignorance. He doesn't know a wheel-barrow from an act of parliament; yet is he the luckiest, jolliest man on earth, as rich as the sea, and the very picture of fat, contented ignorance. His round rosy face, his witless laugh, everything about him bespeaks utter vacuity of mind. "Thought would destroy his paradise." Educate a man and you make him critical; being critical he will become fastidious: and once fastidious, farewell forever to enjoyment! To an ignorant man the world is full of surprises; and surprise is, according to Burke, one of the primary elements of happiness. A lettered man is surprised at nothing. "*Nil admirari*" is the maxim of his joyless life; but your ignoramus is ever in a transport of sudden delight. Explain things to him, and you destroy interest and curiosity at a blow. It is mystery that gives zest and piquancy to existence. Who would find the slightest satisfaction in the marvellous exhibition of a conjurer if the secret of his magic were divulged? Why should any man be taught algebra, that "execrable joke," as the old gentleman calls it in the play? Tom Sheridan was one of the pleasantest, brightest-hearted of men, yet he lived and died in the belief that algebra was one of the learned languages. Your scholar, roving by the sea-side, sets his poor brains on the rack thinking about conchology, the current of the tides, the law of storms, and all the rest of it. Your ignoramus doesn't care a fig-stalk for any of these things: and what the worse is he? He enjoys his walk, and goes home with the appe-

tite of a hunter. No knotty points of science spoil his digestion at the dinner-table or chase sleep from his pillow at night. He rises fresh and vigorous in the morning, and goes for a ramble through the woods. Here no questions either of botany or philosophy disturb his repose :—

> "A primrose by the river's brim,
> A yellow primrose is to him,
> And it is nothing more."

Certainly not. What more should it be, Mr. William Wordsworth? Surely you don't mean to say that it is an artichoke? No; a primrose *is* a primrose, and nothing else on earth. "Fleas are not lobsters, d—— their eyes!" said Peter Pindar with equal truth and elegance, Then again for astronomy. What's the use of it? what good purpose can it possibly serve? Mr. William Shakespeare was a man of no small intellect, and mark what he says about astronomers :—

> These earthly godfathers of Heaven's lights,
> That give a name to every fixed star,
> Have no more profit of their shining nights
> Than those that walk and wot not what they are."

Not a jot! Who ever heard of the moon shining more brightly, or of the stars winking more waggishly, at an astronomer than at any other man? It is more than they would dare to do. Moreover, it is worthy of remark, that learning takes the pluck out of a man. The learned are ever cautious and circumspect; the illiterate are intrepid and adventurous. Fools rush in where angels dare not tread, so that you see the fools have by far the best of it. *They* go in and win while the angels stand outside shivering in the cold. Learning

destroys a man's faith in his own work. An ignorant man may quarrel with all the world besides, but he is invariably on the best of terms with himself. He is in love with himself, and—as the French epigram phrases it, "*n'a point de rival*"—has no rival. Give him mental culture, and his self-esteem vanishes in an instant. His arrogance and presumption will disappear, taking with them his peace of mind. Teach him music, and the barrel-organs and brass bands to which he now listens with rapture will jar upon his ear with intolerable discord. The vilest chromo is now to his eyes even as the lovliest Claude. Give him an idea of color and form, and he will no longer sit in the same room with the daubs that once gladdened his eyes. You will have deprived him of innumerable sources of delight. He will fall into a wretched habit of forming unfavorable comparisons, and instead of enjoying the sublime spectacles presented to his vision, he will bethink him of others yet more delightful which he may not behold. When he sees Mr. Lowe upon his bycicle, instead of being thankful to fortune for the noble sight, he will hark back in imagination to classic times and picture to his mind's eye Alexander mounted upon Bucephalus. When somebody reads to him a page of Mr. Tupper, instead of clapping his hands in transport, he will groan inwardly and shout for Mr. Tennyson. He has eaten of the tree of knowledge and the fruit has disagreed with him. And so it is all the world over. We sit through a play, and read through a book, deriving amusement from each, because we are as yet unaware of the *dénouement* of either. Think you that the crowds swarming eagerly through the streets of London in the prosecution of business, or the holiday-makers who, frantic with en-

thusiasm, throng the banks of the Thames to witness the Boat Race, would be thus zealous in the pursuit, either of profit or of pleasure, could they but gaze into futurity and see with what sorrows and solicitudes the coming years may be fraught for them? No; they are happy because they are ignorant—happy, too, in the precise proportion of their ignorance. The veil that hides the future from their view was woven by the hand of Mercy. And as with the future, so also with the past; the less we know of either the better for our mental tranquility. Othello found not Cassio's kisses on the lips of Desdemona till Iago told him they were there, so true is it that,

> "He that is robbed, not wanting what is stolen,
> Let him not know it and he's not robbed at all."

How much more comfortable would this world be, and how much more smoothly should we all jog along together in it, were it not that some restless, inquisitive busybodies are eternally enlightening us on a matter in respect of which ignorance were indeed bliss. Spoon-fed from earliest infancy upon the London fog, I would now swallow it like jelly, and deem it an atmospheric delicacy, but that I was bullied to visit Italy, the Mediterranean, and the South of France. Ever since I have sickened at the thought of my native fog, and shuddered at the sight of the mustard-poultice in which the English sun is picturesquely bandaged. Those wretched analysts, too, what misery they cause me! Why will they not let me eat my food and drink my liquor in peace? I am willing enough to take things for what they profess to be, and to enjoy them accordingly. I don't want to be told that my butter is lard,

my bread alum, my milk chalk and dogs' brains, my port log-wood and sloes, my sausages dead cats, or my vinegar muriatic acid. Devil take it! Can't you leave me alone and let me be poisoned in peace? What is it to you? only that you are poor and busy. Prejudice they say is the daughter of Ignorance. What then? An illustrious lineage for a most respectable progeny. Nothing can be more respectable than honest prejudice, and the more pig-headed it is the better. Of all things in the world it is the most convenient, seeing that it supersedes the necessity for reasoning and argument. I am proud to say that I am a man of the most accomplished ignorance and the most inveterate prejudice, and I would not exchange my ignorance and prejudice for the wisdom of Minerva and her Owl. Not content with unsexing our women and destroying the supply of domestic servants, those pestilential school boards—but hark! What's that? The clock! And gone twelve! I had no idea it was so late. "To bed!—to bed!" as Lady Macbeth beautifully remarks. I can write no more for the money; but I hope I have written enough to prove that Ignorance is man's best friend, and that high indeed is her dignity and matchless her delight.

THE DELIGHTS OF DECEPTION.

GRANTED that a lie in morals is a turpitude unworthy of a gentleman, the fact remains that a lie is the very soul of art, and that without it there were no art worthy of the name. In fact, a lie stands in pretty

much the same relation to art as grapes to wine or hops to beer. It is wonderful to think how subtle and insoluble is the connection between deceit and intellectual enjoyment. Take what province of mental effort you may, whether the dramatic, the artistic, or the literary, and you will find that deceit is the warp from which has been woven the web of the spell that enchants you. When Butler wrote his immortal maxim—"The pleasure is as great of being cheated as to cheat," he gave expression to one of the truest, profoundest thoughts that ever fell from the pen or lips of man. The more we dwell upon it the more vivid becomes our sense of the wealth of philosophy hived within the homely saying, like honey in the bag of the bee. "*Qui vult decipi decipiatur*"—let him be deceived who desires to be deceived, says the Latin proverb, and what man is there, or woman either, who does not cherish such a desire?—

> "What man so wise, what earthly wit so rare
> As to descry the crafty cunning train
> By which deceit doth mask in visor fair
> And seem like Truth whose shape she well can feign?"

There is no such man, good old Edmund Spenser, and if there were he would be the most unhappy wretch on earth. This disenchanted world would lose all its lustre for him who could no longer find joy either in being cheated or to cheat. For what do we go to the play, inspect a picture, or read a story, if not for the luxury of being befooled for a season into a belief in that which we know to be untrue? If it were humanly possible for Mr. Sothern to be really Lord Dundreary, for Mr. J. S. Clarke to be truly Dr. Pangloss, for Mr.

Toole to be actually Paul Pry, or for Mr. Irving to be veritably Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, we should derive but little satisfaction from seeing any one of these artists. We are profoundly convinced that it is physically impossible for any actor to be in reality the personage whom he pretends to be, and that conviction is the main-spring of all the enjoyment that we experience in the contemplation of acting. We are lost in wonder and delight to think with what consummate craft a man can put off the semblance of himself and assume that of somebody else who may have lived hundreds of years ago, or, stranger still, who may never have lived at all, being merely an ideal creation made incarnate by the magic of genius. In each case the artist is employed upon the exquisite elaboration of a lie, which he has brought at last to such perfection that truth seems falsehood to it. Hence the gratification we find in witnessing their work. We know that we are being imposed upon ; but we willingly surrender our judgment to the masterly impostors, and our pleasure is in the precise proportion of the skill with which we are bamboozled. And as in playing, so in painting. What is it that awakens our admiration in viewing a finely-executed landscape? It is assuredly the marvellous hypocrisy with which the painter conveys the sense of space, imitates the hues of vegetation, the form and movement of the clouds, the action and expression of seas and rivers, and by means of a speck or two of color upon an inch or two of canvas realizes to the vision of the spectator the amazing mystery of perspective. These be no true skies, no real rivers ; these trees that seem to wave are in fact motionless ; there is not a drop of water in that foaming sea; not a gleam of light in the sunbeams,

dancing upon its radiant surface ; of course not. It is all deception—rank deception ; it is but a painted lie, and for that very reason we love it and would beg, buy, or steal it if we had the chance. We plume ourselves upon our sagacity, but we are fooled to the top of our bent and glory in the fact. We are in no better case than the silly cock of true Yankee breed who crows to wake the morn with his shrill clarion, it matters not at what hour of the day he may behold Mr. Church's picture of "Sunrise in the Andes." In the perusal of some great work of fiction, such, for example, as *Tom Jones*, *Ivanhoe*, or *Pickwick*, we are equally, though in a different sense, the willing victims of deception, giving loose rein to our fancies, and gladly suffering the author to lure us out of this work-a-day world into what imaginary realms he listeth. We are but puppets in his hands, and dance to what music he may be pleased to play. It is all humbug, sheer humbug ; but we like to be humbugged, and but for that precious privilege life would be intolerably monotonous. Nor is it only in the ideal realms of literature and art that deceit bears supreme sway, or that man finds pleasure in deluding or being deluded. The same rule holds good in every section of society and in all the operations of every-day life. Dryden tells the tale with his customary vigor of illustration :—

> "For the dull world most homage pay to those
> Who on their understanding most impose.
> First man creates, and then he fears the elf ;
> Thus others cheat him not, but he himself.
> He hates realities, and hugs the cheat,
> And still the only pleasure's the deceit ;
> So meteors flatter with a dazzling dye,
> Which no existence has but in the eye.

At distance prospects please us, but when near,
We find but desert rocks and fleeting air;
From stratagem to stratagem we run,
And he knows most who latest is undone."

What would become of quackery, in all its multitudinous forms of cozenage, but for that inveterate love of being cheated, which is one of the most mystical endowments of our nature? Were it not for that unaccountable and irrepressible attribute of ours, where would the projectors of bubble companies be? how would law and physic thrive? where would Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke and the whole college of conjurers be? and whither should the countless army of "*chevaliers d'industrie*," who now batten upon the credulity of the public, turn for a dinner? It stands to reason that both in cheating and in being cheated there must be what Lord Bacon styles "a constant quick sense of felicity and a noble satisfaction." And this accounts for a great deal of what would otherwise be inexplicable in much that is passing around us. It was but the other day that a parson was taken up by the police for having stolen an eightpenny book from one of the stalls at a provincial railway station. The reverend gentleman was in excellent circumstances, and could have well afforded to pay for the book; but no; if he had done so he would have missed the intellectual gratification of knowing that he had eluded the vigilance of the boy who had charge of the stall. He succeeded in so doing, and must have felt proud of the achievement. Unhappily, however, he did not escape the lynx eye of 198 Z, at whose righteous hands he came to grief. Then again it is an every-day occurrence for well-dressed men occupying a reputable position in society to be detected

in the fraud of travelling in a first-class carriage, though they had only purchased a third-class ticket. Do you suppose that these men run the risk of a ruinous exposure for the sake of saving a few shillings, or it may be a few pence? It is inconceivable. They run the risk, and think it well worth running for the glory of thinking that they have "done" the company. Stolen kisses are sweet; so too are stolen rides. To overreach in a bargain is with some traders the highest art of commerce, and it is more than probable that this sentiment, quite as much as the desire of unjust gain, is at the root of the adulteration system. It has been said that your true-born Yorkshireman would go through fire and water for his father, but could not withstand the temptation of "Jockeying" him in a transaction of horse-flesh. Be this as it may, there is no denying that, not in Yorkshire alone, but all the world over, the delights of deceit are often too fascinating to be resisted. This is no new thing. Centuries have elapsed since Sir T. Wyatt wrote this quaint verse—not less true than quaint:—

> "Soonest he speeds that most can lie and feign,
> True-meaning heart is had in high disdain;
> Against deceit and cloaked doubleness,
> What 'vaileth truth or perfect steadfastness?"

But of all forms of deception, the most amusing to the spectators, and the most disastrous to the parties mutually deceiving and being deceived, are those frequently practised in the art and mystery of love-making. It too often happens that each of the lovers wears a mask, and that both are equally intent upon the same design of throwing dust in the other's eyes. They wear the most seductive of smiles, tone their voices to the

most melodious of keys, assume an air of the most gracious courtesy, and leave nothing undone to make it appear that they are infinitely sweeter, nicer, and better than they really are. To use the terrific metaphor of Lady Macbeth, "they look like the innocent flower and are the serpent under it." This perfidious game goes on through the whole course of courtship, the gentleman passing for a very Bayard of fearless and irreproachable chivalry, the lady simply for a seraph whose wings have moulted. With marriage comes the "*désillusionnement.*" Both the high contracting parties then drop their masks, and each stands confessed for what he or she really is, a common place person enough, and not a jot better than the ordinary run of humanity. If they would have the sense to accept the situation, and good-humoredly to say the one to the other, "Well, we have both been acting: the play is over; let us resume our true nature and get on comfortably together," all might be well; but the mischief of it is that instead of pursuing that sensible course, each inveighs against the other for an hypocrisy of which both were equally guilty. The same sort of thing goes on in society in quarters where youth, inexperience, and the entrancement of passion can no longer be pleaded in extenuation. There is such a thing as "company-manners," of all things in the world the most hollow and deceptive. A witty French essayist has divided our friends into three classes, "*Ceux qui nous aiment; ceux qui ne nous aiment pas; et ceux qui nous détestent*"—"Those who love us, those who love us not, and those who hate us." Under the *régime* of company-manners all these three classes are treated with the like cordiality. The people who deal the most abundantly in frowns and sneers at home are not unfre-

quently the most prodigal of smiles abroad. They are not amiable, but they desire to be thought so. They go about in a mask, which if not very attractive has at least the merit of concealing their true features. But let us not be too severe upon mankind either in the abstract or the concrete. Something is due to the exigencies and "*convenances*" of society. It would never do to tell everybody what you think of him, nor would it at all conduce to your own comfort that everybody should treat you with the like candor. The sun of social favor shines with equal splendor, if not upon the just and the unjust, at least upon the genial and the ungenial. So that there be nothing against a man's moral character, he is not to be cold-shouldered for an ungainly presence which he cannot help, or a perverse temper which may perhaps be the result of a weak digestion. We must take the world as we find it. The sternest of moralists glancing inwardly will have some compassion for the innocent deceits of human bodies, if he would not shut the gates of mercy on himself. And, after all, man is not more wicked in this regard than Nature herself, who is everlastingly befooling him. Nothing endures; everything passes away, the brightest still the fleetest. Where is the rose of yesterday? Indeed, in some respects, Art has the "pull" of Nature, for artificial flowers are well-nigh as beautiful as the flowers of the garden, and last much longer, to say nothing of their never wanting to be watered. The azure sky that gets suddenly overclouded, the gorgeous rainbow vanishing as we gaze, the treacherous ice crashing beneath our feet, the sea now smooth and placid, anon rough and frantic, the mirage of the desert luring but to betray, and the dead-sea fruit which tempts the eye, but

turns to ashes on the lip—these are illustrations of the delight that Nature takes in deceiving; and Man, regarded simply as the Son of Nature, is not much worse than his Mother.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

IT may, perhaps, tend to our consolation in seasons of trial and depression to remember that a fleet alternation of sunshine and shadow is the inevitable law as well of the moral as of the physical world. Nor should we fail to observe how beneficial is the operation of that law in either sphere. The gracious rains beautify and fertilize the earth. We discern their delightful and salutary influence in the freshness and brilliancy of the landscape, in the verdure and lustre of the foliage, in the goldenness and affluence of the corn-field, in the fragrance and effulgence of the garden. The scenery of the firmament is due altogether to the clouds. The violet arch of an Italian sky is lovely to look upon for a time; but wanting the magnificent drapery of clouds with their marvellous refinement of texture, their endless diversity of hue and tone, and their infinite variety of form, action, and grouping, it soon becomes wearisome and monotonous. There is no emotion—no picturesque passion in a cloudless sky. It lacks spirit and character. To rain as well as light we owe the radiant bow that spans the vault of heaven; and we may thank the clouds for those gorgeous effects of light, shade, and color

which suffuse the mountain crests with splendor ineffable, and gives to sunset a dazzling grandeur—a mystic glory which is the despair of painters. There is not in the whole range of literature any more sublime thought than that of Sir Walter Raleigh, that sun, moon, and stars, resplendently luminous though they seem to our eyes, are but shadows of the Omnipotent:—"In the glorious light of heaven we perceive the shadows of His divine countenance." Descending from such celestial contemplations to the consideration of our sublunary home, we shall find that whatsoever things are majestic, whatsoever things are beautiful in the external world, are due in no small degree to the fleet alternation and poetic contrast of sunshine and shadow. What can be more exquisite than the tremulous network of lights and shades cast upon the green sward by the leaves and branches of a tree swaying in the breeze? What can be more graceful than the coursing of shadows over bending corn or athwart the sparkling surface of a summer sea? Thunder clears and purifies the atmosphere, which for a while it had troubled so alarmingly; and the oak strikes deeper root for its wrestling with the storm.

How wayward soever a man's destiny may be, it will not fail to present analogies expressly correspondent with Nature, as well in her gladsome as in her pathetic aspects. No one who loves manly truth better than morbid prejudice will hesitate to admit that if there is much to endure, there is also not a little to enjoy in our earthly pilgrimage. If life were indeed the dark dismal bondage that it is sometimes pictured, who would care to live? Who would not welcome death as the most precious of boons? But we are unfair to Providence and

ourselves. In the intelligent contemplation of the manifold beauties that surround us, in the zealous exploration of the fair domain of knowledge, in the converse of loyal friends, in the enchanting mystery called love—here, here we have, indeed, abundant sources of delight. Nor is this all. A thousand things around us administer to our physical and intellectual enjoyment. The ear is ravished with the melodious strains of music; the eye is gladdened with the cunning creations of art; eloquence and poetry exalt the imagination; wit and humor rejoice the fancy. As steel brighteneth steel, so doth the countenance of a man his friend. There is a solace beyond all price in the interchange of genial thoughts, and a comfort not to be told in the communion of sympathetic spirits. Go where they may, little children are ever the harbingers of innocent delight. Joy lurks in their rosy smile, glows on their cloudless brows, mantles in their damask cheeks, and no rhetoric is comparable to their lisping accents. "To press the velvet lip of infancy," as Thomson charmingly phrases it, is among our happiest privileges. We recall the days of our own childhood, and are lost in wonder to think what can have become of the children that we ourselves once were. Ah! what indeed? In the very sense of physical existence, when coupled with perfect health, there is an exhilaration to which no words can do justice. Who has not felt this the more particularly when engaged in any manly exercise, in the hunting-field, or on the cricket-ground, or while travelling on foot through a new and picturesque country? There is yet another and a higher view of the question. Let no one complain of the want of sunshine, that brightest and most beneficial of all—the sunshine of the heart—who has not treated himself to the priceless luxury of doing good!

Ah ! there were no lack of sunshine, moral or natural, if it would but last. My only fault with all that is bright is that it fades too surely. What is truly tragic in human life is not, as some absurdly maintain that it is, destitute of joys—on the contrary, it abounds in them, but rather that they and we are of such brief duration. The wind passeth over us and we are gone !

King James I., whom historians and dramatists delight to depict as a witless inelegant pedant, wrote a couplet of admirable melody and truth, which is more than can be said for any other monarch who ever sat upon the throne of England :—

> " Crowns have their compass, length of days their date,
> Triumph her tombs, felicity her fate."

In the sad thoughts thus eloquently expressed, dwells all that the human imagination can conceive of poignant and disheartening. They are but too true, these tragic thoughts, and our personal experiences of their truth are the shadows with which our sunbeams are continually interlaced. " Life is but a walking shadow," says Shakespeare, and who that calls to mind his own shattered projects, his blighted hopes, his vanished youth, his broken strength, and, saddest of all, the friends he has seen around him fall like leaves in wintry weather, can doubt the justice of the saying ?—" *Pulvis et umbra sumus !*" " We are dust and shadow ! " Our joys are but " the perfume and suppliance of a minute ;" our life itself, what is it ? A castle of frost-work confronting the sun. Faith points to happier spheres of everlasting duration, and bleak and dark, indeed, were life with all its sunshine but for that hope ; yet am I fain to avow that

in the knowledge that all things lovely hasten to decay, that the lustre fades from beauty's eyes, the lily from her cheek, that the hand we clasp grows throbless in the clasping; that no two lovers can wed and no two friends weave their bond of amity on other condition than this, that at no distant day one shall weep over the grave of the other; in the knowledge, I say, of all this there is, to my thinking, a certain unspeakable sadness for which the most confident hope of immortality is powerless wholly to atone. Who has not felt that the death of a friend is a sorrow not to be surmounted by faith the most fervid and unclouded? Who does not know that the loss of a child is an arrow in the heart, which the parent takes down to the grave? We are born into shadow as well as sunshine, and, though not mourning as those without hope, we must still mourn. Never since the Mosaic era has there been any such creature on earth as an old man or an old woman. Eagles, ravens, and oak trees attain antiquity; but human beings never. We have not time to grow old. We do not live long enough. "To look around us and to die," as Alexander Pope expresses it, is our utmost achievement. "What shadows we are! What shadows we pursue!" exclaimed Edmund Burke. "*Ave et Vale!*" is our covenant of life. Dwelling on these sad fancies one autumn evening at the sea-side, as I bethought me of an immedicable sorrow, thus spake my melancholy muse in her own rude, untutored strain:—

Hail! and Farewell! Such is the fleet condition
Of earthly intercourse; we meet to part.
Joy perisheth in rapture of fruition.
Alas, my heart!

The flowers we gather wither in the grasping;
On Beauty's cheek no fadeless lilies dwell;
The hand we clasp grows throbless in the clasping.
Hail! and Farewell!

Hail! and Farewell! The smile of welcome beameth
Brief as effulgent upon lovers' lips.
In hope exultant, Youth but little dreameth
Of hope's eclipse.

Nor cares to think that Time, who looks so radiant,
Is disenchanting Fancy's magic spell,
To dust dissolving all her fairy pageant.
Hail! and Farewell!

Hail! and Farewell! 'Tis thus each short-lived pleasure
Fades from our vision like a phantom wan;
We turn to gaze upon our new-found treasure,
And lo! 'tis gone.

Mid the delights that we most keenly covet,
Still are we startled by fond Memory's knell.
AVE! et VALE! Oh! my Heart's Belovèd,
Hail! and Farewell!

Let us cull comfort from the knowledge that we are in better Hands than our own, and that as the rains of heaven beautify and fertilize the earth, as the clouds give grandeur to the firmament and splendor to the sunset, as the storm invigorates the trees and the thunder purifies the air, even so does sorrow adorn, exalt, and refine the human heart. I remember to have met somewhere—whether in conversation or in reading I cannot say—this charming thought, that as the leaves are gently detached from the trees by the abundant rains of autumn, so are our hearts insensibly sundered from this fleeting world by the soft pressure of recorded sorrows. Not in identity of worldly interests, as the selfish tell us, nor yet in the conviviality of the festive board, con-

sists, as the sons of pleasure would have us believe, the true league of brotherhood among men. It dwells, believe me, in community of suffering—in a common liability to grief. That man will be at no great pains to help a friend in adversity who has never felt adversity himself. The heart of such a man is barren and arid as the sands beneath the scorching suns of the equator. Familiarity with the shadows of life is essential to sympathy. In him who has drunk deeply of this cup of anguish, and in him alone, will you find a brother in the hour of danger and distress ; for of this rest confidently assured, that all the world over there is a bond of sorrow as of blood, and that they who mourn are everywhere akin.

THE DECAY OF THE PICTURESQUE.

THE decay of the picturesque is such a sign of the times as the most stoical of philosophers still retaining one touch of poetic sentiment can hardly contemplate without a sigh. It is, I suppose, quite right and proper, and in strict accordance with the eternal fitness of things, that the ornamental shall give way to the practical, and that the graceful and the beautiful shall go down before the advancing tide of commercial innovation ; yet these changes, all inevitable though they be, leave the world less lovely, and, in a certain sense, less enjoyable than they found it. In these "costermongering days" the "dulce" counts for little ; the "utile"

alone is regarded. To money-considerations all other arguments are subordinated; and whatsoever things are comely and of good repute are so esteemed in the precise proportion that they may be turned to pecuniary advantage. There be men who could find it in their conscience to "utilize" the Apollo Belvidere into a tailor's dummy, and to boil potatoes in the Portland Vase. Mr. Batty's niggers are doubtless grinning and gloating over their pickles upon the summit of the Dolomites. Mr. Mechi's knives haunt you, "the handles towards your hand," like Macbeth's dagger, in the holy places of Palestine; and you visit the Pyramids only to be told that if you want to have your furniture removed, Mr. Taylor, of Pimlico, is the man for the job. *Omnia Romæ cum pretio.* The poet and the prophet are the same; and when Hamlet speculated upon the grim contingency that even as he was speaking the dust of Cæsar might peradventure be patching a wall to expel the winter's flaw, he did but foreshadow the day when the Midland Railway Company would convert a churchyard, rich in historic memories, into a luggage station.

A few years ago a ship in full sail was no unfrequent spectacle, and the sun rarely shone on a finer. It was, in fact, according to the old proverb, the third loveliest sight in the world, the other two being a girl in the first bloom of her beauty, and a field of golden corn waving in the wind. Its lithe, symmetrical structure; its ingenious complications of lines and draperies, its subtle play of light and shadows, and the stately, swan-like grace of its movements, as it walked the waters like a thing of life, all combined to give to a sailing ship a majestic charm which gladdened the eye and delighted

the fancy of any spectator not insensible to the enchantments of form, color, and motion. I never saw such a ship that I did not break off my ordinary discourse and exclaim in the language of Milton—to the no small bewilderment of the bystanders—

> "But who is this? What thing of sea or land?
> Female of sex it seems that so bedecked,
> Ornate and gay, comes this way sailing,
> Like a stately ship of Tarsus bound for th' isles
> Of Javan or Gadire with all her bravery on,
> Sails filled and streamers waving,
> Courted by all the winds that hold them play!"

Compare with that superb picture a modern steamboat, panting and groaning like some asthmatic monster, tearing the crystal waves with its vile paws of paddles, flinging its unwieldy hulk "anyhow" upon the tide, and polluting the azure sky and the silver sea with volumes of abominable smoke disgorged from its filthy funnel. The change, regarded from an æsthetic point of view, is not for the better. In the good old days of the wooden walls of England, maritime warfare, and commerce as well, had their poetic aspects; but those aspects have vanished, or survive only upon the walls of the Painted Hall in Greenwich Hospital. Nor is the decay of the picturesque in all that relates to locomotion less remarkable on land than on sea. What with the gaily-colored and sprucely-appointed vehicle itself, with its polished doors and emblazoned panels, the team of spanking roadsters, swift of foot and glossy of hide, champing their bits and tossing their heads daintily in the air, as though they were vain of their effulgent harness, the coachman and the guard both in crimson, the one weilding his whip in gallant style, the other making

the welkin resound with his trumpet, the mail-coach of the olden times, bowling along a level country road at the rate of twelve or thirteen miles an hour, was a right joyous and exhilarating sight. The dogs barked, the children shouted for delight, the middle-aged waved their hats and kerchiefs in the air, and even the old folks looked brighter for the vision as it sped merrily along. You may see it to this day in the window of my friend Mr. Fores' Fine Arts Repository, at the corner of Sackville Street, Piccadilly, and, so seeing it, you may if you please (for there is no compulsion), heave a sentimental sigh, and quote George Canning's famous couplet:—

> "So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourne, glides
> The Derby dilly with its three insides."

Do me the kindness, sweet reader mine, to contrast with that joyous mode of travelling, so favorable to social intercourse and romantic adventure, that ghastly street upon wheels, our modern railway train, with its frantic engine, snorting, screaming, shrieking, puffing, panting, blazing away at the rate of a mile a minute, while the passengers are rocked to and fro, as though they were at sea, and the surrounding landscape rushes past like a flash of greased lightning.

The art of dancing properly so-called is extinct, as much so as are the mediæval arts of illumination and glass-staining. In agricultural operations the decay of the picturesque is everywhere discernible. The days of our Daphnes and Chloes, our Strephons and Corydons, are gone, never to return. Time was when poets and painters made great capital out of the plough, more particularly if it were drawn by oxen, and when rakes

flails, scythes, and reaping-hooks, as used by human hands, were turned to excellent account, both in songs and pictures; but that time is vanished, and we shall never see it more. Virgil himself could make nothing of a steam plough; nor could even Robert Burns or Mr. John Linnell find themes for melodious utterance or pictorial illustration in mowing, reaping, raking, or threshing, as these operations are now conducted by means of machinery. Hay-making was once a charming proceeding, and few sounds fell on a poetic ear with more harmonious cadence than did the whetting of his sickle by a harvestman in a corn-field what time the autumnal breeze coursed briskly over the golden crops, and the sunbeams painted the meadows with delight. But the picturesqueness of husbandry is no more. Buggins, the builder, has killed it. His tall gaunt chimneys, eternally emitting coils of black smoke, and his paltry gim-crack villas of lath and plaster, desecrate the fairest landscapes, so that there really seems some reason to fear that "the country" will soon disappear altogether, and that at no distant date the grim old prophecy will be fulfilled of all England being reduced to London and market-gardens. The treatment to which trees are now subjected, more particularly in the suburbs, may well awaken the indignation of any man whose heart is not as hard as the nether mill-stone, and whose head is not full of mutton kidneys. Greenwich Park was one of my favorite haunts in boyhood. In ages yet unborn, and probably never to be born, pilgrims will resort thither with reverential awe to ramble where I was wont to ramble. I was there last Sunday, in company with a dear friend, and oh! the pity of it, to think what a change has come over the scene! Glen and glade

are still there, and verdant nooks and stately avenues; *these* are as yet inviolate, but the deer who used to troop about in dappled herds are gone all but two or three of no very attractive type; gone, too, forever gone, are the old pensioners, who, clad in their quaint old uniforms, with three-cornered hats and bright-buttoned long-flowing coats, used to cram my youthful mind with lies to that degree that one lie more would have made it burst; and, saddest tale of all to tell, the majestic walnut trees, "those green-robed senators of mighty woods," dating from the reign of King Charles II., and which had been for generations the pride and glory of the park, have been cut across their tops, and are now so maimed and mutilated that they have lost all their grace and grandeur of form, all their litheness and elasticity of movement, and, in many instances, look less like trees than huge monkey-perches or the climbing poles of captive bears. I am not, I grieve to say, so skilled in arboriculture as to be able to pronounce authoritatively on the question of this horrible mutilation. I cannot say whether it is such a proceeding as professional foresters would approve; but this I do know, that it is utterly ruinous of the beauty of the trees; and that it is most injurious to their vigor and vitality is a conclusion from which the attentive observer cannot escape, for in many instances the trees look very sickly, and not a few of them are withering at the top. In no park that I have ever visited have I seen trees subjected to such treatment as the walnuts in Greenwich Park. I don't profess to be a judge, but, speaking according to my dim lights, and according to the testimony of people as ignorant as myself, I should have said that to cut a tree's head off was about as wise a proceeding as to cut a man's head off, and equally conducive to life. My ex-

cellent friend Dr. Bennett, the poet, dwells in this neighborhood—to *its* honor be it spoken; how comes it, I should like to know, that his melodious muse, usually so observant of romantic wrongs, is silent on the sorrows of the deer, the pensioners, and the walnuts? Passing with easy transition from external nature to rural sports, the marks of degeneracy are neither few nor unimportant. Fox-hunting, though not now so picturesque as in the days so happily illustrated by the pencil of Mr. Frederick Taylor, is still a graceful and intrepid pastime. The meet itself is a pretty sight, a still prettier is the run, especially when the men are in pink and well mounted, but fox-hunting is not now in such favor as it once was: and as for shooting, it is now seldom known in any sense honorable to the manhood of the nation. How rarely now we meet with a sportsman who thinks of rising at cock-crow and tramping in search of birds over meadow and mountain, moss and moor, with a dog at his heels! In lieu of that adventurous and manly sport we have battue-shooting and such poulterers' business as the slaughter of pigeons. Why don't those Hurlingham heroes come into the city and have a "go in" at the Lord Mayor's pigeons in Guildhall? But if our sports are no longer very becoming, what shall be said of our clothes? Here, indeed, the decay of the picturesque is deplorably apparent. What more pitiful contrast can there be than that between the costume of the cavalier, as it is depicted, for example, in the pictures of Sir John Gilbert and Mr. Charles Cattermole, and the morning attire of a gentleman of the nineteenth century with his chimney-pot hat, his hideous coat, and his execrable trousers? From top to toe he is, as already observed, a collection of cylinders.

The costume of the British army was once very handsome; but they are constantly changing it and always for the worse. Epaulettes were brilliant and beautiful, but epaulettes have long since been abandoned, and the blue frock, which was very elegant and soldierly, has been discarded for a shell jacket which is neither the one nor the other. As for the loose tunic recently introduced, it is beyond comparison the ugliest garment ever invented to make the human form unsightly and ridiculous. The Highland costume, as it is somewhat inaccurately styled, is, to my thinking, the most picturesque dress in the English army; but of the many regiments which once used it, only three still wear it, and the day is probably not remote when sartorial reform will abolish the kilt altogether and substitute the trews. I confess I am old-fashioned enough to like to see servants in livery. Thus clad, they give to a nobleman's or gentleman's equipage a certain air of courtly observance and attendant pomp which has an imposing effect; yet the fashion is passing rapidly away, and each succeeding season one sees fewer liveried servants in the park. I, at all events, will not deviate from the old usage. Nobody has ever seen nor shall anybody ever see *my* coachman without a wig, *my* footmen without powder, or *my* page without scores of buttons. The time of Queen Anne and the elder Georges may or may not have been less comfortable than our own; but most assuredly it was more picturesque. The Upper Ten were then magnificently apparelled and wore powder and patches and feathers and swords. It must have been a gallant sight to see them going to play, opera, or ball in their grand old coaches and four, with two or three footmen behind, each holding a blazing link:—

"The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign
Here richly decked admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare."

'Hansoms" were unheard of in those days, and tram-cars, of all vehicles the most abominable, were beyond the dreams of the wildest maniac who ever raved in Bedlam. On the other hand there is less likelihood of a man's being hanged nowadays than there was in those more romantic times.

PROUD YOUNG PORTERS.

STUDENTS of the "Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman" will not fail to bear in comic remembrance the "Proud Young Porter," as not the least amusing personage of that delectable romance. His portrait has been drawn by Mr. George Cruikshank, and a very laughable picture, indeed, it is. How pompous is that Proud Young Porter in air, aspect, and expression! How haughty is his mien! How fantastic is his every attitude! He is altogether a most ridiculous fellow, though he has not the slightest suspicion of the fact. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the Proud Young Porter exists only in poetic fiction. Bless your dear heart! he is of constant recurrence in every-day life, and go where he may, he is more free than welcome. The world is infested with Proud Young Porters, but for whom this planet of ours would be far pleasanter and more comfortable than it really is. Be

it remembered that the word "young" has no necessary application to the age of the Proud Porter, but should rather be taken to relate to the unfading verdancy of his folly and the amaranthine vigor of his vanity. In that sarcastic sense, the word "*jeune*" is often used by the French. "*O papa! que vous êtes jeune!*"—"Well, papa, how young you are!" as much as to say, "What a fool you are!"—observes a brat of seven summers to his father, aged sixty, in the comedy of *La Famille Benoiton*. And so it is with your Proud Young Porter. A man may be well on for ninety, and yet be a Proud Young Porter all the same. Nor is it essential that the Proud Young Porter should be a veritable carrier of burdens, or an actual opener of hall-doors. The phrase "Porter" must be understood to express, not the lowly occupation, but the ignoble nature of the man who, for all his pride, has only the *soul* of a shoe. Proud Young Porters belong to all classes and conditions, all ranks and professions of men. You may find them in the Church, the Army, the Navy, and the Bar; in art, literature, science and commerce. Wherever found, they are snobs and duffers to a man. Your Proud Young Porter, of whatever calling, disdains the poor, deeming poverty and crime convertible terms. He is easily pleased, for he is contented with himself. It invariably happens that his disesteem of others is in the precise proportion of his inordinate estimate of himself. You would like to buy him at your price, and sell him at his own, but it would be no such easy matter to procure a purchaser. Blackberries cost nothing, and they are filling at the price. As much may be said of civility; but though civility were as dear as ottar of roses, your Proud Young Porter could not be more chary of it than

he is. He cannot vouchsafe a smile or a courteous word to any fellow-creature who is not exceedingly "well-off," but to such a person he is as servile as he is supercilious and offensive to people of smaller means. The Proud Young Porter is afflicted with sudden ophthalmia when he meets an old school-fellow in a seedy coat. For the dear life of him, he cannot see him. Friend he has none, that Proud Young Porter; no, not even himself, for though he knows it not, he is his own worst enemy. To do him justice, he loves his enemy. But proud men never have friends; neither in prosperity, because they know nobody, nor in adversity, because then nobody knows them. Your Proud Young Porter is alone—all alone in the world. It happens almost invariably that he is a bachelor; for I know not how it is, but a married man generally has the "cheek" taken out of him. But married or single, your Proud Young Porter is a nuisance. He has been starched without being washed, and he is, in consequence, the most unpleasant person in the world to have anything to do with.

The Proud Young Porter in the Army puts on a lot of "side;" talks of his uniform as "livery," which he affects to hold in utter contempt; scorns civilians, and hardly deigns to account Volunteers and Militiamen as human beings at all. His speech is only of the "Service," though he never smelt powder stronger than tooth-powder, and perhaps not overmuch of that. He refers to the Heir-Apparent as "Wales," and to the Commander-in-Chief as "George." He would have you believe that he is hand-and-glove with them both, and that he knows all about the secrets of the Horse Guards. Nothing could give him keener delight than

that England should go to war with all the nations of the earth, for then promotion would go on so quickly; but he hates "Gib.," and has no great stomach for India. The Proud Young Porter is not very common in the Navy, but even there he sometimes crops up, and very edifying, indeed, it is to hear him enlarging on the errors of the Admiralty, and the unseaman-like manner in which Captain Broadside handled his ship in the Channel Fleet. I saw a Proud Young Porter in the pulpit no later than last Sunday, and my word! to observe how superbly he tossed his nose in the air, how daintily he turned over the leaves of his drowsy sermon, how authoritatively he delivered himself upon dogmas the most abstruse, and with what flippant familiarity he discoursed on the most solemn and sacred themes as though he were in the special confidence of Heaven—it was enough to make one shy a hassock at his head. Oh! he *was* a Proud Young Porter, that little exquisite of a parson, five feet one in his stockings; and it is to be hoped that his mother has not many more like him. Of a very different type was another preacher—one Bunyan by name—of whom Southey narrates that "he had a great dread of spiritual pride; and once after he had preached a very fine sermon and his friends crowded round him to shake him by the hand, while they expressed the utmost admiration of his eloquence, he interrupted them, saying,—'Ay! you need not remind me of that, for the devil told me of it before I was out of the pulpit!'"

But it is ever so. "I never yet found pride in a noble nature, nor humility in an unworthy mind," writes good old Owen Feltham. In a like strain discourses another ancient worthy:—"I have observed many tum-

bles through life, but I have invariably noticed that it is the man who mounts the high horse that receives the least pity when he falls." Depend upon it, that Proud Young Porter, ungracious as he is to the world at large, could be obsequious enough where "thrift would follow fawning." In such a case he would emulate the servile conduct of his prototype in the "Loving Ballad":—

"O avay and avay vent the Proud Young Porter
Oh, avay and avay and avay vent he,
Until he came to Lord Bateman's chamber,
Ven he vent down on his bended knee."

That is just what your Proud Young Porter invariably does, when anything is to be gained by sycophancy. Another and very odious sort of the Porter is himself a journalist, who not only cannot find merit in any work of art, be it play, poem, or picture, submitted to his judgment, but holds in the most insolent scorn anybody else who does. For the members of his own profession he cherishes sentiments of the most rancorous contempt, affecting to regard them one and all as dunces. He is great upon the decay of critics, little dreaming that he furnishes in his own person the most egregious example of the truth of his theory. The Proud Young Porter of commerce is never to be looked for in the ranks of the Prince Merchants who have contributed so largely to the greatness and glory of England. He is the veriest mushroom. "A self-made man" is he, as he delights to tell you with a conceited chuckle, though goodness knows he has but scant cause to be vain of the manufacture. With him the amount of a man's money is the measure of his moral worth, and to be

respectable simply means to be rich. He has no end of cash, but he is badly off for *h*'s, poor fellow, and the flocks that graze the plain know quite as much as he about the works of William Shakespeare. In fact, a book is about as interesting to this Proud Young Porter as is a chronometer to a cow. I know a splendid specimen of this City Porter—a broker, who rose from nothing, and cannot be said to have reached much higher, though he is wallowing in money. But, oh! what airs he takes upon himself, and what a Proud Young Porter he is, to be sure, as he loafs along the street, with his glossy hat and a huge posy in his button-hole! He is "dying of dignity," as Dr. Arnold said of the Church of England; but you might put his wit, learning, and refinement in your eye, and you would see none the worse for them. Then, again, there is the Proud Young Porter of the Bar, who talks about "the *other* branch of the profession," meaning the solicitors, pretty much in the tone in which the Turks of old, after classing all living creatures except swine in one category, alluded to the pig as "that other animal." But this Proud Young Porter changes his tune in the presence of a solicitor, and invariably behaves towards him with elaborate politeness. What *can* the reason be? But of all the Proud Young Porters going, save, O save me from a saint! When your Proud Young Porter, stiff with the starch of sanctity, emerges from his conventicle, look out for snubs, ye unregenerate! He is strong in faith, that Plymouth Brother, or that most particular of Particular Baptists, but he is weak in charity, so look out!

These and all other varieties of the Proud Young Porter are pests to society. Zounds! Do they never think of their own shortcomings, and the mortal condi-

tion of their earthly estate? Who are they, that they should presume to treat with disdain any human being on earth? They would do well to bear in mind the words of an American satirist:—"Great men never swell. It is only your three-cent individuals who are salaried at the rate of $200 a-year, and dine on potatoes and fried herrings, who put on airs and flashy waistcoats, swell, puff, blow, and endeavor to give themselves a consequential appearance." No discriminating person need mistake the spurious for the genuine article. The difference between the two is as that between a barrel of vinegar and a bottle of the pure juice of the grape. And what a magnificent passage is this from the writings of Sydney Smith, in whose presence your Proud Young Porter of whatever class would have been unworthy to stand!—"Take some quiet, sober moment of life, and add together the two ideas of pride and man; behold him, creature of a span high, stalking through infinite space in all the grandeur of littleness. Perched on a speck of the universe, every wind of heaven strikes into his blood the coldness of death; his soul floats from his body like melody from the string; day and night, as dust on the wheel, he is rolled along the heavens through a labyrinth of worlds, and all the creations of God are flaming above and beneath. Is this a creature to make for himself a crown of glory, to deny his own flesh, to mock at his fellow, sprung from that dust to which both will soon return? Does the proud man not err? Does he not suffer? Does he not die? When he reasons, is he never stopped by difficulties? When he acts, is he never tempted by pleasure? When he lives, is he free from pain? When he dies, can he escape the common grave? Pride is not the

heritage of man; humility should dwell with frailty, and atone for ignorance, error, and imperfection." Well said! well said! thou glorious philosopher! Whose cheek does not flush the crimsoner, whose eye does not flash the brighter, whose heart does not beat the quicker for thine inspired words? There is one man, and one only, who would not be touched by such an appeal. And who is he? The Proud Young Porter. For him alone was the world created, for him alone, poor booby of an hour, do sun, moon, and stars shed their light upon this gorgeous world:—

"Ask for whose end the heavenly bodies shine?
Earth, for whose use? Pride answers, 'Tis for mine.
For me, kind Nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower.
Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew,
The juice nectarious and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings,
For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise,
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.'"

All, all for the Proud Young Porter! Alas! and a-well-a-day, he is, for all his pride, the veriest gnat in all creation! How little knows he of true glory! how little of manhood worthy of the name! We may safely say that "always and everywhere true genius is ever modest, real superiority is always generous, and genuine science is at all times just." Of this, at all events, you may rest confidently assured, that no Proud Young Porter was ever yet a gentleman.

THE ABSURDITY OF GOING OUT OF TOWN.

THERE is but one thing more absurd than staying in town, and that is going into the country. Man, to be sure, is everywhere, and always a ridiculous object, and under whatsoever conditions of destiny, whether civic or rural, cannot fail to afford matter of derision to the animals whom he has the insolence to call the "lower." But then there are degrees in absurdity, as in all other things; and ludicrous though a man may be in Marylebone, he is a hundred-fold more so at Margate. In London, life is doubtless very nonsensical, but in certain of its phases it is nevertheless very enjoyable; whereas in the country it is outrageously preposterous, without being in any sense pleasant. Indeed, the longer one lives the more one must admire the philosophic reflection of Sir Charles Morgan, who, having spent half an hour in a village, confessed his inability to understand why people should live in the country when they might die so much more cheaply in London. It is lamentable to think what opportunities of happiness are discarded and what occasions of discomfort are invited by the people who, in compliance with an idiotic fashion, fly out of London, as though it were on fire, during the months of August and September. Inverting the order of the seasons as laid down by Dr. Johnson, we may rest assured (but we won't) that London is the best place in winter and the only place in summer. Indeed, delightful as is the Village

on the Thames in the former period, it is incalculably more so in the latter. London in summer-time abounds in sights and sounds the most gratifying and ennobling that can be imagined.

"One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of human evil and of good,
Than all the sages can."

So spake William Wordsworth, but don't believe a word of it. Say rather :—

"One impulse from a chimney-pot
Will teach you more of man,
Of what you've learned and what forgot,
Than all that Wordsworth can."

The affinity between a chimney and humanity is remarkable. A good fellow is called in the slang of the day, a "brick." A chimney is made of bricks. A man's hat is commonly known as a "tile" and a "chimney-pot;" and as for the fumes that issue from the flue, they teach the most truthful of all lessons,—*Gloria mundi fumus*, the glory of the world is smoke. So passeth it away. How any person having the faintest pretensions to sanity, not to say taste, can prefer a flower to a paving-stone, a river to a sewer, or a tree to a chimney-pot, is one of those mysteries which deride human comprehension, and demonstrate the contemptible insignificance of mind. A tree is the most servile of living things, meanly obsequious to every wind that blows, the veriest creature of the climate, which withers or smashes it according to the caprice of the moment; whereas a chimney-pot defies the elements, sways neither to the right nor to the left, but maintains a posi-

tion of majestic rigidity, like a good man in adversity, and like that same individual, emits volumes of beautiful smoke, which, curling gracefully aloft, come into picturesque contrast with the less lovely clouds that drape the azure sky. Then, again, consider the pavements you walk upon in London, how warm and comfortable they are to the feet, like stoved blankets or baked bricks. How unlike the horrid footpaths in the country, with their flinty knobs and rigid inequalities, which knock your boots to pieces, torture your corns, and make painful indentation in the soles of your feet! In London during the noon-tide of a summer-day, you seem to be treading amid smouldering ashes or upon the smooth, scorching surface of a subterranean oven; and what can be nicer? If, at the same time that you pursue your course thus luxuriously, the fumes of hot asphalte salute your nose, while the sunshine is blistering the nape of your neck, your condition is ineffably blissful. .Indeed, the play of sunbeams upon various objects in the great metropolis is something so magnificent, as to be beyond all power of description. One loves to see them dancing upon the helmets of those blue-coated darlings, the policemen, glancing upon their brilliant buttons, and lighting up their heroic faces with a beauty not of this world. In the full blaze of summer sunshine, the lovely red pillar boxes, erected by the Post-Office authorities for the express purpose of frightening nervous horses, look redder and lovelier than ever. But, oh! what language can describe the effulgence of the green putrid water tossed up by the fountains in Trafalgar Square, when the golden rays are reflected and refracted with dazzling splendor upon the rotten flood! Where can you see anything like

that in the country? Ah! where, indeed? When to the fragrant perfumes exhaled from these matchless fountains are added the refreshing odors from the sewers, and from the excavations made in the streets by the gas-fitters, the result is such a compound of exquisite smells as is not to be paralleled upon the spicy shores of India, or amid the aromatic mountains of Araby the Blest. Then, again, what a charming place is Euston Square! and where else on earth could a man fond of the picturesque and beautiful hope to spend a summer day so delightfully? But no; I am wrong. There is in London one lovelier place than Euston Square—the Underground Railway. Talk of scenery! What scenery on earth is comparable to that of the Underground Railway? Oh! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought! who would surrender such a prospect for a heather-clad mountain in Scotland, or the dash of foaming billows upon the yellow sands of Tenby or Lowestoft? Yet as surely as autumn comes round, we find Londoners expressing their disgust of their paradise, and longing for a "change." They want to look at something green. What stuff! Can they not survey their own images in the glass, and rejoice in the verdant prospect, without going to the trouble and expense of a month in the Highlands, or upon the shores of the melancholy main? One of the happiest men I ever knew used to spend his holiday upon Waterloo Bridge. For my own part, I had solemnly resolved to retire this summer to Wapping for a fortnight, by way of variety, and should infallibly have done so had not the swimming mania set in with such frenzy. To see ladies buffeted about in the filthy waters of the River Thames, while "doing a swim" for

a wager from London Bridge to Greenwich Pier, would have been too much for my delicate nerves. The shock to my sensibilities would have been so severe as to destroy all the pleasure I should otherwise have derived from a visit to a place for ever sacred and beloved. Yes, Wapping is indeed a charming spot, and the man who cannot make himself happy there would be uncomfortable in Arcadia. Another delightful summer place is Poplar. Its very name calls to mind an exquisite *jeu de mots*. "My dear," said a bridegroom once to his charmer, "this is Poplar, and when you ('u') are there it will be pop*u*lar; and if we both reside there long, it will be populous." A smile broke over the lady's face like sunshine over a lake, and she heaved a pensive sigh. The gentleman simply winked. His words have come true. How strange to think that the pleasures of Poplar, the sweets of Shadwell, the witcheries of Wapping, the pomps of Piccadilly and Pall Mall, the charms of Charing Cross, and the blisses of Belgravia should all alike be wantonly surrendered in August and September, for the vulgar uproar and intolerable *ennui* of some wretched watering-place or another upon the coasts of Kent or Sussex! Compare the tedium of a sea-side resort with the glorious excitement of running away from mad bulls on market-days in the streets of London! But of all the losses sustained by the infatuated lunatics who are content to exchange the intellectual pleasures and æsthetic delights of London in summer for the stagnation and stupidity of the country, the most grievous by far is the loss of the Polytechnic Diving-Bell. That bell is voiceless, yet doth it recall to memory all that is most tender and romantic, most lovely and pathetic in human life. The

number of male arms which have found their way around female waists within the dome of that bell is a matter which well deserves the attention of the Statistical Society. It was while going down in that blessed bell that Belinda Anne promised to be mine. It was while coming up in that blessed bell that Belinda Anne, fairest and most faithless of her sex, changed her mind, and declared that she meant to be another's. I am not sorry. To go up and down in the Polytechnic Diving-Bell, the only true marriage-bell, is simply the most ecstatic delight of which human nature is capable, but how may you hope to enjoy that delight when you are pacing to and fro on that wretched pier at Margate, or eating loose sand by the bushel upon the hideous seaboard of Herne Bay? It is not likely.

THE PLEASURE OF LYING IN BED.

IT is lamentable to think what mad enterprises people will undertake, and what inhospitable regions they will penetrate, in the wild-goose chase after happiness. They will roam all the world over, from Polar Star to Southern Cross; they will freeze with the shivering Laplanders, or pant with the sunburnt Moors; they will climb the loftiest mountains, or plunge into deepest abysses of the ocean; they will encounter the deadliest perils, and endure the most horrible hardships, all in pursuit of the same splendid phantom. For this do men give themselves up, some to war, some to wine, "other some" to women. Meanwhile, they one and all

neglect to seek happiness where alone it is to be found—in bed. It is as though a man should look around for his spectacles, while they are on his nose. There is but one place beneath either sun or moon where dwell perfect peace and genuine comfort, and that place is bed. I have always thought so, and the longer I live the more profound becomes my conviction of the fact. I could not have been more than sixteen years of age when I penned these delightful verses:—

"Never get up! 'Tis the secret of glory,
Nothing so true can philosophy preach.
Think of the names that are famous in story,—
'Never get up' is the lesson they teach.
How have men compassed immortal achievements?
How have they moulded the world to their will?
'Tis that mid sorrows, and threats, and bereavements,
'Never get up' was their principle still!"

An old friend of mine caught hold of these lines before I had time to publish them, and substituted "Never *give* up" for "Never *get* up," and in that ignoble form they have been invariably printed, to the manifest injury of common-sense and public morals. Be it understood that I wrote "get," and that "give" is a false reading. Why should you get up? You are much warmer, much cosier, and much safer in bed. If you get up, the chances are as a thousand to one you will go out; and then consider what risks you incur. You may catch cold, meet a dun, hear a street preacher, see Mr. Whalley, be run over by an omnibus if you walk, or be run away with by your horse if you ride, or a chimney-pot may fall on your head, or a young woman may take a fancy to you and insist upon marrying you, and what then is to become of you? There is no knowing

what misadventures may befall you if you get up; whereas you are perfectly secure, and out of all harm's way as long as you remain in bed. Who ever heard of a man catching a cold, or a black-eye, or of his having his head punched, or of his being knocked down by a Pickford van, or any other description of vehicle, while he was in bed? It is absurd, upon the face of it. Depend upon it, bed is the head-quarters of human felicity, the stronghold of security, the sole seat and centre of tranquillity and delight, and the man who is not comfortable in bed—always assuming that he is in good health—may as well surrender all hope of comfort, for he has no prospect of it anywhere else on earth.

The nonsense that has been written on the subject of early rising might provoke the patience of a saint. An old proverb assures us that "early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." The first half of the adage is true enough, the last is an utter delusion. "Early to bed" will doubtless be of essential service to you in mind, body, and estate; but as for "early to rise," it means, in three short words, all that is most pernicious and most preposterous in the course of your earthly career. The witty little schoolboy who, on being reminded by his father that the early bird gets the worm, replied that the fate of the worm was an awful example of the folly of being up too soon, brained a delusion at a blow, and in so doing established his claim to be ranked among the benefactors of his race. To lie down with the lamb is enchanting, but to rise with the lark is something too dreadful to think of. What is the use of being a man, if you are to act like a lark?—

"Rise before the sun
And make a breakfast of the morning dew,
Served up by Nature on some grassy hill,—
You'll find it nectar!"

What rubbish! Picture to yourself the lunacy of the man who, instead of lingering luxuriously in the blankets till the latest possible moment, and then feasting on congou or mocha, new-laid eggs, cold partridge, and buttered toast, would get up before daybreak, and, going out into the cold raw air, take his stand upon the top of a hill, beneath a sullen grey sky, with the bleak winds blowing all around him, and, perhaps, the rain coming down in torrents, there to breakfast on morning dew served up by nature! Such a fellow ought to be locked up for a maniac, unfit to be at large. Not that I "go in" for breakfasting in bed. It is a lazy, ignoble habit. A man ought to divide his life fairly between bed and board, oscillating between both, on the principle of the old French maxim, "*Du lit à la table, de la table au lit.*" This is a fair division of enjoyments. When you are not at table you ought to be in bed, and *vice versâ*. No one with a particle of self-respect would take his meals in bed. The proper plan is this. Retire at a reasonable hour, say, nine o'clock, at the latest. Read for three or four hours in bed, but be sure that you *do* read. Don't nod, after the fashion of the great Homer. Nothing can be so dangerous as *not* reading in bed. As long as you can read in bed all will be well; but the moment you give up reading, and fall asleep, you are in danger of setting the curtains, and possibly the house, on fire. I knew a fellow once who did both through not reading in bed. Put out your candle about twelve o'clock, and surrender yourself

body and soul to the empire of Morpheus. Sleep, and that profoundly, until ten o'clock the next morning.

I need hardly say that you must not lie upon a feather-bed. It is an abomination. No man worthy of the name would recline upon a feather-bed. To do so were to be guilty of unpardonable effeminacy. Moreover, of all beds in the world, it is the most uncomfortable. It is so full of hills and hollows that you never know where you are. A hair mattrass is the only bed fit for a human being. Very well, then; as the clock strikes ten, you spring from your mattrass into your tub. And mind that the water is cold. If there be ice on the surface, what of that? Smash it with your heel. Scorn the Sybarite who would put a drop of warm water into the freezing flood. Having tubbed, adjourn to your breakfast-room, and partake of a hearty meal. Then go to bed again (it will have been "made" in the interim), taking with you a song-book and a pipe. Spend the day alternately in singing, at the top of your voice, smoking like a chimney, and sleeping like a sea-calf, until the clock strikes seven. At that precise moment get up and dress for dinner. Having devoted a couple of hours to dining and "desserting," light your flat candlestick, and off with you to bed again, there to tarry, waking or sleeping, for thirteen consecutive hours. Thus will you lead a life as honorable to yourself as serviceable to your fellow-creatures. It is just the sort of existence I should pass, but that "Circumstance, —that unspiritual god and mis-creator,"—unfortunately forbids.

It is humiliating and harrowing to read the story of the miseries some men have endured through their inability to appreciate the luxuries of bed. We are

assured that it was the delight of Burns to wander alone upon the banks of the Ayr—whose stream, thanks to him, is now immortal—and to listen to the song of the blackbird at the close of the summer's day. But still greater was his pleasure, as he himself informs us, in walking on the sheltered side of a wood, on a cloudy winter day, and hearing the storm rave among the trees; and more elevated still, his delight to ascend some eminence during the agitations of nature, to stride along its summit while the lightning flashed around him, and amid the howlings of the tempest to apostrophize the spirit of the storm. What stuff and nonsense, to be sure! Better by half for him to have been in bed, poor fellow! For my own part, I never see my fellow-creatures intent on any pursuit, whether of business or of pleasure, without thinking what a pity it is that they are not all in bed. If people could only be brought to understand the dignity and delight of horizontal refreshment, they would not bother their heads about dancing, rinking, cricketing, boating, fishing, shooting, swimming, riding, or any other of those frivolous "recreations" wherewith they are wont to exhaust and debase their natures. See what mischief is done when rivers leave their beds! The consequences are hardly less calamitous when men pursue the like course. There was a time when I was passionately fond of riding. I think I can say with a safe conscience that I have been upon my head in as many hunting-fields as Messrs. Moody and Sankey have fingers and toes, but I have lived to see the absurdity of such pursuits. Any one may have the pig-skin for me now. Give me a warm, cosy bed, a hard mattrass, as before observed, a spring paillasse, fleecy blankets, snowy sheets and a

down pillow; and anybody who prefers the bleak cover-side, "southerly" winds, and a cloudy morning in December, is welcome to them for me. The merriest "view halloo" that ever made the welkin ring, and struck terror into the heart of Reynard, should not divorce me from my pillow. And talking of pillows, what a sweet, soothing sound there is in the very word, and how suggestive it is of suavity and repose! No sooner has he laid his head upon his pillow, than a good man forgives his enemies, and consigns to soft oblivion the sorrows and solicitudes of the day. "Once upon a time," says Lord Bacon, in his own quaint, dry fashion, "a merchant died that was very far in debt. His goods and household stuff were set forth to sale. A stranger would needs buy a pillow there, saying, 'This pillow, sure, is good to sleep on, since he could sleep on it that owed so many debts.'" Just so; I protest I don't care a jackstraw what I owe the instant I press my pillow. Yet there are noodles who prate about the advantages of early rising, and tell us how much we lose by not getting up sooner! Early rising involves the loss of the dearest blessing that Heaven ever bestowed upon man,—"sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care; the birth of each day's life, sore labor's bath, balm of hurt minds; great nature's second course; chief nourisher in life's feast." *That* is what sleep is, and that is what we are called upon to resign for the privilege of mooning about at cock-crow, and possibly knocking up against our creditors on their way from their suburban villas to their shops. I don't see it. Then, again, there are people who would resent any imputation upon their sanity, yet do not hesitate to aver that they would rather be at the play

tnan in bed. Alas, my heart! I went to the theatre the other night to see Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor, in the character of Mr. * * *, and I will do Macbeth the justice to say that he played the part to perfection. The assumed character shone through the actor's own individuality, like a lamp through a lighted alabaster vase. Yet am I fain to confess that I felt tired—oh! how tired—ere yet the play was half over; and when Lady Macbeth, coming on with a bedroom candlestick in her hand, exclaimed, "To bed! to bed!"—"Sweetest of ladies," quoth I, "I will e'en take you at your word;" and so saying, I snatched up my hat, walked out of the house, and made for my bed with all possible expedition.

FOPS AND FOPPERY.

IT is honorably significant of the progress of civilization that foppery is everywhere disappearing. Fops by whatever phrase designated, whether as "fops" proper, "beaux," "macaronis," "sparks," "dandies," "bucks," "*petits maîtres*," "Bond Street loungers," "exquisites," or "Corinthians," have well-nigh vanished from the world. Their very names have become enigmatic. To trace from age to age through all its phases of development the history of these popinjays of fashion were a task not unworthy of satirist or philosopher. It would be interesting to observe the grotesque inspirations of folly as illustrated in the careers of her most fantastic votaries. If not

more virtuous, we are certainly of graver deportment than our fathers, and there is hardly a man of sense among us who will not say with Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*, "Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter my sober house." The fop of the Elizabethan era is doubtless typified accurately in the person of Osrick. How pungently does Hamlet satirize the "waterfly," and how amusingly does he mimic his mincing mode of speech! "To divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but saw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as to make true diction of him. His semblable is his mirror, and, who else would trace him, his umbrage nothing more." This crabbed English is a sarcastic skit upon the affected phraseology of men who aped ton in Shakespeare's time. In *Hudibras* we find mention of a creature known as a "fopdoodle." "You have been roaming," says Butler,

> "Where sturdy butchers broke your noddle,
> And handled you like a fopdoodle."

The "fopdoodle" now exists only in the dictionary. He is no great loss, for his name was sufficiently expressive of his silliness. The fop had a long reign, and figures prominently in the literature of the last two centuries. In the old play of *The Magnetic Lady*, his qualities are summed up with delicate precision. He is pictured as

> "A courtier extraordinary, who by diet
> Of meats and drinks, his temperate exercise,
> Choice music, frequent bath, his horary shifts

Of shirts and waistcoats, means to immortalize
Mortality itself, and makes the essence
Of his whole happiness the trim of curls."

Swift, who seldom lost an opportunity of expressing his contempt for the sex which he used so vilely, is particularly severe upon women for their partiality for fools, fops and rakes:—

"In a dull stream which moving slow,
You hardly see the current flow,
When a small breeze obstructs the course,
It whirls about for want of force;
And in its narrow circle gathers
Nothing but chaff, and straws, and feathers.
The current of a female mind
Stops thus and turns with every wind,
Thus whirling round together draws
Fools, fops, and rakes for chaff and straws."

Covent Garden would appear to have been the favorite place of rendezvous for fops in the time of Dryden, who observes that "farce scribblers make use of the noble invention of laughter to entertain citizens, country gentlemen, and Covent Garden fops."

The "Sparks" were in great force even in the time of Dr. Johnson, who describes them as "lively, showy, splendid gay men." They were of respectable antiquity, hailing probably from the days of the Restoration, when the nation expressed in costume, as in all things else, its wild delight at being emancipated from the grim bondage of Puritanism. The "beau," whom Johnson defined as "a man of dress—a man whose great care is to deck his person," flourished most luxuriantly in the last century. His was the sumptuous age of powder

and patches. He was especially dainty in the matters of sword-knots, shoe-buckles, and lace ruffles. He was ablaze with jewelry, took snuff with an incomparable air out of a box studded with diamonds, and excelled in the "nice conduct of a clouded cane." Age brought him no wisdom, but, on the contrary, rather served to give to his folly a more poignant aroma. He culminated into some such personage as Lord Ogilby in *The Clandestine Marriage*. It has been observed with some touch of wit that a beau dressed out resembled the cinnamon tree, the bark being of greater value than the body. The word "*macaroni*," as applied to a fop, is of curious origin. In its primary signification it means a kind of paste meat boiled in broth, and dressed with butter, cheese, and spice.. How it came to be used for the designation of drolls and fools is explained by Addison in the *Spectator*. "There is a set of merry drolls whom the common people of all countries admire and seem to love so well that they could eat them, according to the old proverb ; I mean those circumforaneous wits whom every nation calls by the name of that dish of meat which it loves best. In Holland they are termed 'pickled herrings,' in France '*Jean Potages*,' in Italy '*macaronis*,' and in Great Britain 'Jack Puddings.'" The transference of the word from fools and clowns to men of fantastic refinement and exaggerated elegance is a singular circumstance, of which philologists have not as yet given a satisfactory explanation. That the phrase did undergo that strange metamorphosis of meaning is beyond all question. Sir Benjamin Backbite, in *The School for Scandal*, applies the word to horses of a good breed, as distinguished from those of inferior lineage :—

"Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies,
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronis;
To give them this title I'm sure can't be wrong,
Their legs are so slim and their tails are so long."

The human Macaronis had a pleasant time of it, but they were eventually supplanted by the "Dandies," who for several generations bore supreme sway in the realm of fantastic fashion. "Dandy" is traced by etymologists through "Jack-a-dandy," of which it is an abbreviation, to the French word "*dandin;*" but some grammarians are of opinion that the English term is borrowed from a very small coin of Henry VII.'s time, called a "dandiprat." Be this as it may, the "dandies" were for many a long year potentates whose influence was far too great to be measured by any coin, much less a dandiprat. They were probably at their prime in the days of the Regency, which epoch, however, they long survived. Lord Byron confesses to a predilection for them. "I like the dandies," he says, "they were always very civil to me; though in general they disliked literary people, and persecuted and mystified Madame de Staël, Lewis, Horace Twiss, and the like. The truth is that, though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of dandyism in my minority, and probably retained enough of it to conciliate the great ones at four-and-twenty." Lord Glenbervie foreshadowed the fall of the dandies, and luxuriated in the anticipation :—"The expressions 'blue-stocking' and 'dandy' may furnish matter for the learning of commentators at some future period. At this moment every English reader will understand them. Our present ephemeral dandy is akin to the Macaroni of my earlier days. The first of those expressions has become classical, by Mrs. Hannah More's poem of '*Bas*

Bleu,' and the other by the use of it in one of Lord Byron's poems. Though now become familiar and trite, their day may not be long—*Cadentque quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula.*" But the dandies saw Lord Glenbervie down, and lived to come in for Mr. Carlyle's rugged denunciations. "Touching Dandies," writes the *Sartor Resartus*, "let us consider, with some scientific strictness, what a dandy specially is. A dandy is a clothes-wearing man—a man whose trade, office, and existence consist in the wearing of clothes. Every faculty of his soul, spirit, purse, and person, is heroically consecrated to this one object,—the wearing of clothes wisely and well; so that as others dress to live, he lives to dress. The all importance of clothes has sprung up in the intellect of the dandy, without effort, like an instinct of genius: he is inspired with cloth, a poet of cloth. A divine idea of cloth is born with him." Still more severe is this epigram :—

> "A Dandy is a thing that would
> Be a young lady if it could,
> But as it can't, does all it can
> To show the world it's not a man."

To the Dandies succeeded the "Exquisites" and the "Loungers;" lady-killers all, who laid themselves out ostentatiously for female conquest and broke women's hearts like china-ware. They talked, walked, danced, did everything in a style of their own; and their motto was "look and die!" After these came fops of a ruder, more adventurous type known as "Corinthians," the "fastest" of "fast" men, who delighted in street broils, and such riotous achievements as are depicted in *Tom and Jerry*. They, too, have had their day. "Corin-

thianism" and "Dandyism" are alike as dead as a door-nail. Practical joking is now but another name for ruffianism, and your fast man is voted a "cad." No one now-a-days apes excessive finery in dress, or seeks to attract notice by any startling peculiarity of *mise* or carriage. Every one in decent circumstances, and having any pretence to the conventional designation of "a gentleman," dresses well but quietly. Anything *outré* in his attire would provoke a sneer. Anything "loud" is in bad form. Thanks to the Jews,—not to the better class of Hebrews, amongst whom may be found many well-bred people, but to the lower order of Jews with their pinchbeck chains, their flashy pins, and their boisterous display of gimcrack rings upon unwashed fingers,—Christians won't wear jewelry. A small "Albert," and possibly one ring of the simplest design, is, generally speaking, all the *bijouterie* that any man who has been baptized ever cares to carry. A disdainful tone in conversation, coupled with a certain affected silliness of observation, was once deemed essential, but it is so no longer. Sam Rogers met in his travels on the Continent an English lord, with more money than brains—Lord Maynard he was styled—who on some casual allusion being made to the House of Commons, stuck his glass in his eye and exclaimed haughtily, "The House of Commons! Ah, yes; I remember. Is *that* going on still?" This stolid bit of patrician "*hauteur*" passed for a fine flash of wit at the time, but the man who would speak thus in our time would be written down an ass. Nor, indeed, is it to be wondered at, that Lord Maynard's title is extinct. Of the whole tribe of fops, the "Lady's Man" is now the sole survivor, and he becomes rarer every year. He will soon have utterly

disappeared, and the sooner the better, for of all the caricatures on humanity that ever encumbered the earth, the Lady's Man is assuredly the most contemptible. It is worthy of remark that to Pierce Egan, one of the trashiest of trashery writers, belongs the glory of having coined a word which has obtained universal currency—the word "swell." The phrase, however, is no longer used in the sense in which Egan used it. It no longer serves to designate a pompous, pretentious fellow, swelling into false consequence like the frog in the fable. Any decently-clad man of reputable position may now be called in slang phrase a "swell," which is simply the opposite of a "rough." There is nothing in common between the swell and the fop. As for your "Snob," he is simply an addle-headed creature, who meanly makes court to people of higher rank than his own. He reveres them and seeks to imitate them, not for their virtue or their talents, but because a nod from a lord is a breakfast for a fool. Of slaves and wretches such as these, we have, heaven knows, enough and to spare. Your "dandy" was bad enough, but your thorough-paced "snob," is incomparably worse. Your dandy, for all his fine airs and fantastic clothes, might be at heart a gentleman, and often was so; but as for your "snob," he hardly deserves to be accounted a human being, much less a gentleman. Dandyism was bound to fall, for it was founded upon a fallacy—the fallacy that manners should be artificial, not natural. The very reverse is the fact. "Manners make the man." True, but they must be the manners of nature. Those of art unmake him. The heart is the fountain of courtesy, as of honor. All forms of civility springing elsewhere than from the heart are but shams—mean tricks of ceremony

put on and off, like mere matters of personal decoration. He is truly courteous, and he alone, whose courtesy is the outcome of a genial, generous nature. Such a man may lack the requirements of etiquette, but never that benevolence whose external manifestation is a delicate regard for the feelings of others. Be his position in society what it may, that man is a "gentleman;" than which there is no higher title.

THE PLEASURES OF SILENCE.

SUPPOSE we all make a solemn determination to hold our tongue! Let us observe this rule as rigidly as possible, and you may depend upon it that such of us as shall live till this day twelve-month will have no cause to rue the resolve. Mr. Carlyle enjoys the credit which properly belongs to an old Eastern proverb-monger of having been the first to remark that speech is silver, but silence is gold. His queer idiom to be sure substitutes "silvern" for "silver" and "goldern" for "gold," but *that* is Carlylese, not English, so let it *not* pass. Say we rather that speech is silver, but silence is gold; and let us lay the maxim to heart with the most sedulous attention. In our transactions with our fellow-creatures, let us one and all make a vow to pay in the more precious currency as often as circumstances will permit. Beware of words! Use them as little as you can. Nod, wink, shake your head, look wise, shrug your shoulders, make some

significant gesture, but don't open your lips if you can at all avoid doing so. Never open your mouth for any other purpose than to put something in it. When you have nothing to say, say it; and be sure to be in that condition as frequently as you can. The least said the soonest mended, and that which is uttered not at all will never need correction. What is the use of talking? Anybody can talk; but a faculty for silence is one of the rarest and most valuable of talents. "Much tongue and much judgment seldom go together," writes Sir Roger Lestrange, "for talking and thinking are two quite different faculties." So they are, Sir Roger, and the latter is by far the more estimable. "*Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur*," quoth the Eton Latin grammar—"he is a wise man who speaks little"—but how few there are who appear to be of that opinion! Everybody wants to have his say, and when he has had it, it usually proves of little worth. I knew a pretty girl once, "whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!" She was the most taciturn of her sex. "My dear," said her mother to her one day, "why *don't* you speak? If you don't talk, people will suspect you are a fool." "Mother," replied the maiden, "it is surely much better that people should merely suspect me to be a fool while I hold my tongue, than that they should know it for certain when I begin to talk." The old lady was, to speak in the *argot* of the day, "Shut up," and her daughter passed with all the hearers for what she was in truth—a damsel wise as beautiful. We have it upon the authority of the classic chroniclers that Ulysses was the most eloquent *and the most silent* of men; "he knew that a word spoken never wrought so much good as a word concealed." Why are there so many wretched marriages

in the world? Simply because, when the Bride and Bridegroom were asked by the parson whether they would have the one the other for husband and wife, respectively, they said "Yes." If they had only held their peace and walked silently out of the church, there would have been no marriage and no misery. Why, oh! why could they not have borne in mind the good old Scottish precept—"Keep your breath to cool your porridge." One brilliant flash of silence is worth all that Cicero or Demosthenes ever uttered. Give me the man who, while tongues are clacking all around him, looks straight down his nose, quaffs his wine plenteously, never stops the bottle, and utters not a word. He and he alone is your true philosopher. Babblers are fools to a man—

> "The coxcomb bird so talkative and grave
> That from his cage calls cuckold, thief, and knave,
> Though many a passenger he rightly call,
> You hold him no philosopher at all."

Certainly not. He is but a "tongue-pad," as our forefathers were wont to say. It is my happiness to know a man who, after he has had a dinner-party at his house, and the guests are gone home, all except some four or five who know their cue to stay, addresses these choice spirits thus—"Come now, dear boys, let us enjoy ourselves. Light up; draw your chairs round the fire; and *hold your tongues.*" They quietly obey. And there they sit in a dreamy delightful symposium, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies, and wrapped in luxurious meditation till the clock chimes three, when each man shakes the other by the hand as at a Quaker's meeting, and putting on his hat hies homeward. Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent under that

friend's roof. Nor, indeed, is that half a bad story that is told about a certain madman, who found himself at a ball, and though he opened not his lips appeared to enjoy himself amazingly. But nothing would induce him to take his departure until he had seen every other guest out of the house. When they had all gone, the mistress of the feast ventured to ask him why he had remained so long. "Well," said the lunatic, "I observed that still as each batch of visitors took their leave, those who remained behind had something ill-natured to say about them ; so I resolved to be the last to go, that there might be nobody left to backbite me." That witty maniac knew the value of silence ; and truly he had his reward. The ancients, who were in many particulars much wiser than we, set great store by silence, and deemed it so heavenly a gift that they placed it under the special tutelage of two of their most honored deities. Of all the Goddesses in the Grecian mythology, I have the profoundest reverence for Calypso, and of all the Gods for Harpocrates. They were the celestial Silentiaries of the classic divinities, and were always represented with the forefinger of the right hand placed tranversely upon the lips. Calypso, to be sure, if we may trust "Telemachus," had a good deal to say for herself when she was jilted by the King of Ithaca ; but Fenelon, methinks, has more to answer for than she in the matter of her love-lorn lamentations. It was a profound idea that of making Harpocrates equally the God of Silence and of Light. "Not inaptly," writes the Epicurean, "doth the same deity preside over Silence and Light, since it is only out of the depths of contemplative silence that the great light of the soul—truth—can arise." In a like spirit speaks Emerson, "Let us be silent that we may hear

the whispers of the Gods." Euripides was wont to say that "silence was an answer to a wise man; but we seem to have greater occasion for it in our dealings with fools and unreasonable persons, for men of breeding and sense will be satisfied with reason and fair words." So thinks Plutarch, who is rarely in the wrong. The sarcasm so frequently directed against women on account of their supposed loquacity, furnishes a striking exemplification of the unfair treatment which the fair, the only "fair" sex perpetually receive at the hands and tongues of their hereditary foe, man. I have known men by the score who could talk the hind-legs off an elephant, and who nevertheless seldom utter anything worth remembering, far better things going into their mouths than ever come out. In France you not unfrequently meet with signs over inn-doors representing a woman without a head, and with the inscription beneath *A la bonne femme;* as much as to say that when she has no head, and then alone, will she keep her peace. This, I dare say, is likewise the meaning of the "Silent Woman" at Chelmsford. It is a slander of common kin with that too true story about the young law-clerk who, being ordered to engross a deed commencing with the stereotyped words, "Know ye all men by these presents," wrote instead, "Know thou one woman by these presents." His explanation was that it was all the same, for that if one woman knew it, all men would be sure to know it also. Was ever known such impertinence? And that boy lived to be the father of a family! I know him well. Ah! woman, woman, thou long-suffering martyr, when wilt thou turn upon thine arch enemy, Man, and slay him as he deserves to be slain? It is worthy of remark that one of the

most eloquent champions of silence was a woman—Madame Guyon, and it is, indeed, marvellous to think what a lot she has to say on such a topic. "There are," she observes, "three kinds of silence. Silence from words is good, because inordinate speaking tends to evil. Silence or rest from desires and passions, is still better, because it promotes quietness of spirit. But the best of all is silence from unnecessary and wandering thoughts, because that is essential to internal recollection, and because it lays a foundation for a proper regulation and silence in other respects." And then she goes on to talk till all is blue about these different descriptions of silence. I was greatly delighted with an anecdote I read the other day in an American paper about a sweet silent girl, who, having been worried by her brother, uttered no word of complaint, heaved no sigh, fell into no sentimental sickness, dying at midsummer when the flowers were in full bloom and all the birds in full song, but who quietly seized a rolling-pin and speechlessly dealt the naughty boy such a blow upon the head that he was unable to put his hat on for a month, so big was the lump she produced upon his skull. "Silence is the perfectest Herald of joy," says Shakespeare, and that darling girl must have felt the truth of the sentiment as she noiselessly brandished her rolling-pin above the devoted head of her offending brother. In the music of silence there are a thousand varieties; and not in the knowledge of things without, but in the perfection of the soul within, lies the true empire of man—and of woman as well. Nor are the charms of silence confined to the moral world. There is nothing in nature so eloquent, so impressive, so romantic as silence. What is it that gives

to the sunset hour so magical an enchantment?—what is it that gives to night so mystical a spell?—what should it be but silence? Milton's description of the first evening in Paradise is, indeed, sublime:—

> "Now is the pleasant time,
> The cool, *the silent*, save when the silence yields
> To the night-warbling bird."

And what a matchless picture is this:—

> "Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
> Had in her sober livery all things clad.
> *Silence* accompanied; for beast and bird,
> They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
> Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
> She all night long her amorous descant sung.
> *Silence* was pleas'd; now glow'd the firmament
> With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led
> The starry host, rode brightest till the moon,
> Rising in clouded majesty, at length
> Apparent Queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
> And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

Silence is associated with all that is most touching and profound in devotional feeling. "An instinctive taste," says Coleridge, "teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire steeples, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars."

Moore has some lovely lines about the river Moyle gliding placidly along, and the zephyrs which he entreats to "break not their chain of repose." Byron, too, is very eloquent on a similar theme describing with tender grace the gentle landscape where—

> "Not a breath crept through the rosy air,
> And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer."

And as in the country, so too in the town, where the effect is quite as impressive though the mode of manifestation be dissimilar. To me there is a solemnity little less than awful in the aspect of the streets of London very late at night, when the myriad-tongued city is hushed for awhile in profound sleep. There is something appalling in the imaginary contrast between the death-like stillness reigning all around, and the turbulence and confusion, the clash of vehicles, and the roar of traffic which will resound right and left when the streets shall swarm once more with busy denizens, and the seething sea of commerce shall roll tumultuous from Charing Cross to Tower Hill. I know of but one thing in the external world yet more impressive, and that is the contrast between the magnificent emotion of a tempest-fraught sea where wind and wave are striving for mastery, and the placid expression of the moon in the sable sky above, sailing benignantly through silvery clouds, and looking so calm and gentle, while this little planet of ours is in such terrific coil. If we would be thought mild, meek and lovable, let us imitate the example of the moon not, indeed, in her discreditable practice of living upon borrowed silver, but rather in the noiselessness and serenity of her behavior. In other words let us hold our tongues. This much I do venture to offer by way of friendly counsel. "The rest is silence," quoth Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

VIS COMICA.

OF all our mental attributes that known as *Vis Comica* is perhaps the most precious, because the most comforting and consolatory. That element of comedy, seldom wanting from the composition even of the most tragic natures, which enables a man in hours of depression to regard things from a ludicrous point of view, and to extract matter of merriment from his very misfortunes, is more valuable than the profoundest teachings of philosophy in qualifying him to endure with equanimity the troubles and tribulations of life. Thomas Hobbes, of Salisbury, said many a wise thing in his time, but never anything wiser or more beautiful than this: "Laughter is a sudden glory." So assuredly it is, and but for this glory, which, splendid as sudden, bursts through our clouds of sorrow like sunshine in a shady place, what would become of us? Liberius will have it that this privilege of laughter is of Olympian origin, and alike distinctive of gods and men. "*Risus enim divum atque hominum est æterna voluptas.*" Laughter is the everlasting delight of gods and men. To us sad sojourners in a sphere which the poets are wont to describe as a valley of tears, the right and the faculty to laugh are simply our dearest prerogative, our most indispensable possession. It is the fountain in our desert, the manna in our wilderness. "I have nothing for it," said Oliver Goldsmith, "but to sit down and laugh at the world and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it." Who cannot call to mind occasions

of difficulty and dejection when the *Vis Comica* has come triumphantly to his rescue? Some persons are far more richly endowed than others with this happy gift, and the method of its manifestation in themselves and its effect upon others are among the most wonderful mysteries of our being. Such people may be accounted the comedians of private life, and very pleasant and beneficent is the mission they have to fulfil. Go where they may, they are ever welcome ; for, provided always that their matchless talent is refined by good taste and tempered by good feeling, they bring the summer with them and make everybody the brighter for their presence. It is marvellous to think what an atmosphere of fun seems to surround some people, what an air of festivity they throw around the dullest things, and what radiance of expression they impart to the most commonplace emotions. Like Ophelia, they turn "thought and affliction to favor and to prettiness," and still as they go they "scatter smiles on the uneasy earth." We laugh at them, and with them, but never ill-naturedly so, for the mirth they awaken is ever genial and has no taint of malice. Do what they may, they never fail to exhilarate and delight us. A wave of their hand, a glance of their eye, the slightest inflection of their voice, nay their very walk—though they should never open their lips —suffices to move our laughter. These are the people who, in right of their *Vis Comica*, acquire enthusiastic applause for jests and stories of little intrinsic value. Told by them, jokes of no great point and anecdotes of no great interest will set the table in a roar. The worthless matter wins mystic value in the narration, and what from other lips would be dull and cold as lead is "sunshine spoken" from theirs. Lord Bacon has gone to

the trouble to transmit to remote posterity a *mot* of King Jamie's, than which nothing can be much more silly: "King James, as he was a prince of great judgment, so was he a prince of marvellous pleasant humor. As he was going through Lusen by Greenwich he asked what town it was. They said Lusen. He asked, a good while after, 'What town is this we are now in?' They said still it was Lusen. Then said the King, 'I will be King of Lusen.'" The wit of that royal remark is rather occult. The King may perhaps have intended to say that the town being so long, he must needs be long a king who should hold the sovereignty of it. This may or may not be what Jamie meant; but wit that requires to be analyzed and explained, hardly deserves the name. It should flash upon the fancy instantaneously as light upon the eye, else it is no true wit. "The marvellous pleasant humor" must have dwelt in the King's way of uttering the words; and that humor is, of course, incommunicable by writing. Addison mentions his having met a fellow in Italy whose talk was of the dullest, "yet was there something so comical in his voice and gesture that a man could hardly forbear being pleased with him." Foote had a *Vis Comica* of his own, which being, even as he was himself, utterly brutal, came upon friend and foe like the kick of a dray-horse. Such, for example, was his truculent reply to the inoffensive little man who mildly remarked that he had come up from Essex—"The devil you have! *Who drove you?*" Sheridan's wit combined with the flash of the gem its solidity too, and was invariably free from gratuitous rancor. It was "more nearly allied to good-nature" than wit always is. Dean Swift's wit was usually like forked lightning, scathing and blasting what it touched; but it

was at times as mild as the moonbeams. It happened one day that his cook, whom he invariably called "Sweetheart," had greatly over-roasted the only joint he had for dinner. "Sweetheart," said the Dean in the blandest possible tones, "this leg of mutton is overdone. Take it back into the kitchen and do it less." The cook replied, that the thing was impossible. "But," said the Dean, "if it had been underdone you could have done it more." The cook assented. "Well, then, Sweetheart," rejoined the master, "let this be a lesson to you. If you needs must commit a fault, at least take care it is one that will admit of a remedy." The mingled wit and wisdom of this admonition are delightful. The *Vis Comica* of Sydney Smith was magnificent. It must have been glorious in his conversation, for apart from the enchantment of delivery it is glorious in his writings. It foams and flashes through his graphic page like an exulting river through a picturesque landscape. It now and then occurred that he fell in with a dullard who failed to perceive at a glance the aim and purport of the canon's humor. This is a "damper" to most men, but Sydney Smith always turned it to good account. How very funny is this: "A joke goes a great way in the country. I have known one last pretty well for seven years. I remember making a joke after a meeting of the clergy in Yorkshire, where there was a Rev. Mr. Buckle, who never spoke when I proposed his health. I said he was a buckle without a tongue. Most persons on hearing laughed, but my next neighbor sat unmoved and sunk in thought. At last, a quarter of an hour after we had done, he suddenly nudged me, exclaiming, 'I see *now* what you meant, Mr. Smith; you meant a joke.' 'Yes,' I said, 'sir, I believe I did.'

Upon which he began laughing so heartily that I thought he would choke, and was obliged to pat him on the back." This *ex post facto* apprehension of fun, stealing sluggishly over a Bœotian intellect, but at last flaming out in uproarious mirth, has in it something exceedingly ridiculous. Equally comic is the canon's method of dealing with such witlings as take pleasure in charades. "I can say nothing of charades and such sort of unpardonable trumpery. If charades are made at all, they should be made without benefit of clergy; the offender should instantly be hurried off to execution, and be cut off in the middle of his dullness, despite his attempts to explain to his executioner why his first is like his second, or what is the resemblance between his fourth and his fifth." Who can forbear a smile at the notion of thus summarily ejecting the "funny man" of a party, who even while he is being extruded desires to explain why his first is like his second, and what relation his fourth bears to his fifth? Lord Palmerston had a racy and benignant *Vis Comica* which stood him in excellent stead on countless occasions, enabling him to turn the laugh against his adversaries, and to avert an awkward argument by means of a joke. Men will differ as to his qualifications as a statesman, but there can be no second opinion about his *bonhomie*, or about his right to rank with those

> "Whose happy alchemy of mind
> Can turn to pleasure all they find."

Vis Comica no longer survives in its pristine vigor and brilliancy among the majority of comedians upon the British stage. We have a bright minority of good actors. Mr. Buckstone is an admirable comedian of a

good old school. Mr. Phelps, weak in tragedy, is strong in a comedy, which, though not unctuous, is life-like and of high finish. Mr. Sothern, one of the most brilliant and gentlemanlike of actors, has a vein of eccentric humor all his own. Mr. C. Mathews' acting in his palmy days was bright, fluent, effervescent—the very champagne of dramatic mirth. Mr. Toole deservedly enjoys universal popularity. Mr. Hare is a true artist. Mr. Compton, Mr. Lionel Brough, and Mr. J. W. Hill all merit honorable mention ; but these and a few others are the *élite*. The generality of our comedians lack comedy. They aim for the most part at little more than a spirited recitation of the text ; they saunter through their parts, it may be, with a certain grace and gayety, speaking what is set down for them with propriety, if not with splendor of declamation ; but their humor is fitful and occasional, and their fun flashes with uncertain and intermittent gleams. It comes and goes like Acres' courage. They are fragmentary in their style ; they do not understand the enduring of themselves with a dramatic individuality as with a garment. They are at times pleasant and enjoyable enough, but they step in and out of their characters, reverting every now and then to their own personal selves, which crop up irrepressibly and will not be submerged. They have around them no continuous spell of illusion. They want the inventive power to imagine a distinct ideal, and the executive skill to give to that ideal a living embodiment, even as a sculptor having first bethought him of a figure might call it into mimic existence, awakening to radiant semblance of life the dormant block of marble. Above all, they want that *Vis Comica* which gives to the personages of comedy sustained energy and brilliant vitality, making each of them

a complete and well-defined creation *totus teres atque rotundus*. Of bygone actors not yet far distant from our own day, Dodd, Edwin, Liston, Jack Reeve, Munden, and Tyrone Power would appear to have been preëminently endowed with this precious gift. They are gone, for ever gone, those matchless players, but the laughter they evoked is historic, and the echoes of its peals still ring in the ears of posterity. Mr. Wright was full of *Vis Comica*, but Wright is lost to us for evermore. There is no actor now upon the stage who possesses the *Vis Comica* in such perfection as Mr. J. S. Clarke. If the amount of merriment he creates may be taken as the measure of a comedian's skill, this actor assuredly stands in the van of his profession. He is a very master of his art. He is instinct with the spirit of comedy. Everything he says and does, smacks of it. There is comedy in his every look and action ; it flashes in his eye, beams upon his brow, plays around his mouth, throbs through his voice, and gives irresistible drollery to his minutest gestures. The charm of this, as of all true acting, is that it is perfectly easy and spontaneous. "My invention," says Iago, "comes from my pate as bird-lime does from frize —it plucks out brain and all." Invention such as that never yet made either poet or player. The quality of humor as of mercy is not strained. It must come from the actor affluent and unbidden, like the fragrance from a flower. So it is with Mr. Clarke. He blossoms into fun like a rose-tree into roses. No other comedian upon the stage creates such a *furore* of fun. His empire over his hearers is absolute. "Many comedians may amuse," says the *Times*, "but Mr. Clarke can command an audience." It is worth any money to see and hear the people laughing at him—to observe them swaying to and

fro in the storm of his merriment, and to hearken to their joyous volleys. He scatters mirth broadcast among his audience, and mirth too of so poignant a flavor that the aroma of it dwells ever after in the memory. Having once seen him is to associate his name thenceforward with all that the fancy can conceive of the most humorous and diverting. "I am acquainted," said Lord Byron, "with no immaterial sensuality so delightful as good acting." To realize the truth of this remark, we have but to recall to remembrance the dramatic creations of any genuine actor, and to renew in imagination the enjoyment they afforded us when we viewed them for the first time. What pleasures of memory are evoked, for example, by the very thought of the more important personages in Mr. Clarke's gallery of characters! In what strong and luminous relief do they stand out against the dull cold background of our work-a-day world, and how keen is the sense of intellectual gladness that comes over us as they pass before the mind's eye in comic array—Pangloss, Acres, Ollapod, Paul Pry, Toodles, Babbington Jones, Young Gosling, Wellington de Boots, Waddilove, the eccentric lawyer Red Tape, and the rest of them! It is in the representation of such muddy-mettled rascals as Acres, Gosling, Paul Pry, Tony Lumpkin, and De Boots that this artist's powers of facial comedy are displayed to the greatest advantage. We are irresistibly reminded of Charles Lamb's matchless criticism upon Dodd: "In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpasses all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He

seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling than it took to cover the expansion of his moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder." Though this criticism had been written expressly for Mr. Clarke in the characters of Gosling, Paul Pry, and De Boots, it could not have fitted him to a greater nicety. Talking of his acting in the last-named part, the *Times* observes: "Mr. Clarke remains permanently as Major Wellington de Boots, who, as he at present stands, is purely a creation of his own. Naturally a poltroon, but too good-natured to be utterly contemptible, De Boots is impelled by his name to serve in the militia, and affects a soldier-like air for which he is wholly unfitted. The obvious aim of the actor would be to treat him as a mere Bobadil, but he is nothing of the kind in the hands of Mr. Clarke. The smallness of the swagger, the feeble pomp of manner and voice, the propensity to gallantry that now and then lights up the face so as almost to change the features, and a curious sort of fortitude under degradation that supplies the place of courage, belong to De Boots alone, and his sole ownership is confessed by a thousand minute touches, which cannot possibly be described, but which bears witness to the inexhaustible invention of the actor." Here we have in fullest perfection that *Vis Comica* which is to its possessor a fountain of joy, and which makes every one the happier who comes within its range.

For complete refutation of the hackneyed charge

against modern playgoers of insensibility to the charms of good acting, it is pleasant to cite the amount of public favor accorded in London to the most celebrated of Mr. J. S. Clarke's impersonations. The number of consecutive nights that he has played Ollapod, Bob Acres, and Dr. Pangloss, were sixty in the first case, one hundred and twenty-seven in the second, and two hundred and fifty in the third. In fact "The Heir at Law," and "The Poor Gentleman," with Mr. J. S. Clarke in the principal comic characters, were the first of the great runs of revived old comedies upon the London stage.

THE ART OF WALKING.

I RECEIVED a letter the other day from a gentleman whose name I had never before heard, politely requesting me to "oblige the world," as he prettily phrased it, with an Essay on "Walking." On referring to Johnson's Dictionary—as is my habit in all emergencies—for the meaning of the verb to "walk," I found it thus defined—"To move by leisurely steps, so that one foot is set down before the other is taken up." Said I to myself, and myself said the very same thing to me, "Of a verity this unknown friend of mine must be poking his fun at me in imposing this task upon me, for what man is there on earth of imagination so brilliant, or fancy so affluent, as to be able to pen a treatise upon any such subject as this?" So saying, I incontinently resolved to think no more of the matter, but rather to go to bed, for I had caught a cold, and longed

for sleep. But second thoughts are proverbially best; and when I came to read my correspondent's letter over again, and observed in what terms of eulogy he alluded to my writings, and how high was his estimate of my talents and accomplishments, "Odsbodikins!" said I to myself, and myself said the self-same thing to me, "this fellow is no such fool after all. On the contrary, he is a man of taste and discernment; so I will take the topic in hand, and seriously consider what is to be done with it." Moreover, I have invariably made it a point to do whatever I am told, and to turn my back upon no duty whatsoever, that any fellow-creature may choose to assign to me. In this blessed frame of mind I folded my arms, closed my eyes, and, lolling back in my arm-chair, began to extract from the storehouse of my memory ancient reminiscences of all that I had ever seen, heard, or read on the subject of walking; and, strange to say, the theme grew upon me in magnitude and glory the more thought I bestowed upon it, till at last I arrived at the conviction that, whether regarded from a poetic or a purely pedestrian point of view, there is no other question of greater importance or more profound interest.

When we pause to think that walking is the most obvious and natural mode of progression for a human being, we cannot choose but wonder how few people there are who know how to do it. One might have supposed that walking would have come as easy to a man as swimming to a fish or flying to a bird; but it is not so. In early babyhood we are not able to stand, much less to walk. To "toddle" is our first achievement in the art of locomotion; and there are individuals who, though they may cease to toddle, can hardly be said to

ever arrive at a more dignified or more graceful use of their legs. They "shuffle," or "shamble," or "bounce," or "trot," or "amble," or move along in a mincing gait, or "loaf about," or "waddle;" but they cannot *walk* in any fashion worthy of the name. There is a vast deal of character in the way a man walks, and his temper has more to do with the "'havior" of his limbs than is commonly credited. "By that shambling in his walk it should be my rich banker, Gomez, whom I knew at Barcelona;" says Dryden, in the *Spanish Friar;* and the remark "smacks of observation," for rich men have often, sure enough, a shamble in their walk, and drag their legs along in a slow, ungainly manner, as though they would pull the ground after them in the hope of wringing money out of it. Have you ever observed what a peculiar walk good people have; how carefully they pick their steps, and how sanctimoniously they look down their noses? The Puritanical gait still traditionally assigned to Quakers (upon the stage), has been adopted in real life by Christian Workers, and those inestimable Moody-and-Sankeyites who, with sheafs of tracts in their hands, sally forth upon their house-to-house visitation, and sing the praises of the "Evangelists" wherever they go. They are precious pots of ointment and blessed vessels of election, these same Christian Workers; only one could wish that they would walk more briskly, talk more pleasantly, and not look as though they had swallowed live eels, and found them difficult of digestion. Some people there are of whom we may say in Shakespearean phrase, that theirs is "the forced gait of a shuffling nag." They are vain enough to believe that everybody is looking at them, so they become artificial in their movements, and cannot for the

lives of them be natural. The "bouncers," to whom Albert Smith has, if I am not mistaken, devoted an amusing essay, are, generally speaking, ladies of a certain age. They come towards you with a springy, elastic step, as much as to say, "See how young I am!" They remind you of the wild gazelle on Judah's hill, who "exulting yet may bound," though ruin and desolation meet the gaze on every side. The number of women of whatever age who can walk well is very small, though, of course, much larger than that of men similarly accomplished. Indeed, you may take it for granted that for one man who can do anything well, be it what it may, there are at the very least fifty women who can do it better. And this holds good in walking, as in all things else. It is a saying of Pope's that "they move easiest who have learned to dance;" and as more women than men learn to dance, that may be one reason out of many, why women as a sex walk so much better. The main cause is, of course, to be found in their superior integrity of purpose, and that inner rectitude which gives to the movement of the body a correspondent grace and propriety. Nevertheless, it now and then happens that we meet with ladies very much *embonpoint*, who, eschewing all attempts at walking, properly so called, prefer to waddle. Of this type was the famous Mrs. Gill, who, whenever she felt "poorly," longed to be off to Paris:—

> "Mrs. Gill is very ill,
> And nothing will improve her,
> Except to see the Tuileries,
> And waddle through the Louvre."

Bless her heart! How well I remember the day I first met her there with her guide-book and *Bradshaw's*,

her gingham, her fan, and her shawls, and all her other belongings, waddling through the picture-galleries like a dear old goose as she was, and shedding her cockney "H's" all over the glossy floor. Gill told me on the sly that she preferred a pigeon-pie to the finest picture ever painted by Paul Veronese or Claude Lorraine; but I dare say he was a slanderer. Husbands are such to a man. I know a lady the very reverse of Mrs. Gill; and, oh! what a lady she is—

> "She walks in beauty like the night
> Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
> And all that's best of dark and bright
> Meet in her aspect and her eyes."

Spenser, the poet, tells us of a lady whose tongue kept pace with her feet, and who was well skilled in the wifely duty of upbraiding her lord—

> "As she went her tongue did walk
> In foul reproach and terms of vile despight,
> Provoking him by her outrageous talk."

We occasionally find that people have two kinds of walks,—one for the streets, another for indoors. I have seen fellows move along gracefully enough in the Park, who hardly knew what to do with their legs in the gilded saloons of fashion. In the days of our fathers, ere the foot-pavements were as cleanly and secure as they now are, there was a mighty ado among walkers every now and then about the right to the wall, and many a duel was fought on the point. "I never give the wall to fools," said a drunken young spark one night in Pall Mall to a sedate old gentleman, who was going home inoffensively. "I always do," was the gentle-

man's reply, as he stepped into the street; and the braggart was left in undisturbed possession of the envied place. The days for such broils have, happily, vanished; but though there is no longer any dispute about the wall, your temper is at times sorely tried by vascillating wayfarers, who cannot make up their minds which way to go. You move to the right—so do they; you take the left—they follow your example; till at last you rub noses together in the middle of the footpath, and look like a pair of idiots. There was a time when I used to take off my hat to such waverers, and it was as good as a play to see us both bowing, pirouetting, and gyrating on the pavement for some minutes consecutively, till at last my indecisive friend would make some "cursory" remark and bolt into the middle of the street. But I have no heart for fun now; so I adopt a masterly policy of inaction, coming instantaneously to a standstill, and leaving my tormentor to dance around me as though I were a statue. This is a capital plan. Try it. The art of walking in the streets is so essential to general comfort that one cannot but wonder that it does not command more serious attention. A man should pursue smoothly and circumspectly the noiseless tenor of his way, not throwing his arms about like the shafts of a windmill, not digging his elbows in the ribs of his fellow-passengers, nor thrusting his shoulders forward so as to "cannon" people who have done him no wrong, but "using all gently," and so regulating his deportment as to consult for the ease of his fellow-creatures as well as for his own. In fact, you may know a gentleman by his walking nearly as well as by his talking, a nice regard for the feelings of others being indicative of good-breeding in each case. For the rest,

to walk with grace a man should be drilled. What is it that makes military men look so much taller than civilians of the same stature? Simply that the former have been drilled. The drilled man looks not only taller but manlier, and handsomer than the undrilled, and therefore enjoys much higher favor with the ladies—a fact of greater weight than a thousand arguments to show the value of good walking. Nor should we overlook the rare worth of that art upon the stage, to walk well being one of the most essential accomplishments for an actor who would make a figure in his profession.

So much for "walking" in the purely physical sense of the term. But the word has also a figurative interpretation which the poets have turned to romantic account. To walk means "to appear as a spectre," and in that signification Shakespeare uses it with solemn effect. Thus is it employed, for example, in *The Winter's Tale*—"The spirits of the dead may walk again; if such things be, thy mother appeared to me last night." In the awful picture of Lady Macbeth in her walking dream, the word "walked" gives the key to the whole composition, and tones the mind to terror. It gives you at once the idea of that unrest which comes of mental anguish. "When was it she last walked?" "I have seen her rise from her bed, unlock her closet, take forth paper, write upon it, read it, and return to bed, yet all this while in a most fast sleep." But apart from this metaphysical sense, the word "walk," though apparently one of the most common-place in the language, is susceptible of the most poetic treatment. Nothing can be much lovelier than its import in the description of daybreak, as given in *Hamlet*:—

"The Morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill."

So, too, Byron employs the phrase with the happiest effect in his description of a sailing ship :—

"She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife."

So, also, Wordsworth, in his mournful meditations on the most ill-starred of poets :—

"I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride
Of him who walked in glory and in pride."

Milton waxes eloquent about "the happy walks and shades of Paradise," and makes Adam address his enchantress in these love-lorn words :—"Nor walk by moon, nor glittering star-light without thee is sweet." And what beauty ineffable dwells in these verses of Henry Vaughan (A. D. 1621), suggested by the thought of his dead friends :—

"I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days,
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmerings and decays."

Of similar grace and tenderness are Andrich's verses on the loss of his daughter—verses to be read without emotion by those whose hearts have been wrung by no kindred misery and by them alone :—

"Her sufferings ended with the day,
Yet lived she at its close,
And breathed the long, long night away
In statue-like repose.

But when the sky in all his state
Illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through Glory's morning gate
And walked in Paradise."

But of all uses of the word the most pathetic is that given to it by Macbeth, to illustrate the visionary quality of human existence. "Life is but a walking shadow!" The shadow of a cloud, the Arabs call it, but the figure is too aërial. A *walking* shadow better describes its terrene condition and its spectral affinity to death, whose pestilence walketh in darkness. Yes; "Life is but a *walking* shadow."

THE MISERY OF BEING RESPECTABLE.

I WAS born in a "respectable" station of society. It is a melancholy fact and one which I have never ceased to deplore. Had I been consulted in the matter, I should have much preferred not to be born at all. In that case the loss to my readers would have been enormous; but the gain to me would have been beyond the power of language to express. Here I am, however, and I must make the best of it, but how to do that is a task of no small difficulty. It would not have been half so difficult if I had not had the ill-luck to be born in that rank of life known conventionally as "respectable." Next to having been born at all, the greatest misfortune that can befall a human being is to have been born into what the world calls "respectability." Now let me not be mistaken; I protest against being misunderstood. Why should any body presume to mis-

understand me? Hear me out! "Strike, but hear!" as the Greek slave said of old. Suffer me to explain. *Do* hold your peace for a minute or two. *Do* be quiet. Keep your hair on! Zounds, man! Am I not to be master in my own column, even as St. Simon Stilites was on his? You must not run away with the idea that because I wince beneath the bondage of "respectability," I am therefore a plebeian, of coarse tastes and vulgar sympathies. No such thing. I am a Tory of the grand old school. I go in for Church and State; and good old port whenever I can get it. I abhor Republicanism, despise demagogues, and have not, I am proud to say, one thought or opinion in common with Mr. Odger. My tastes are graceful; my sympathies are refined; I am altogether delightful. I should not care to possess more political liberty than I already enjoy. What I sigh for, what I weep for, what I pine for, what I would give my mustache and front teeth for, is social freedom. I want to be free and easy—to be lord of myself in my goings out and comings in—to live as I like, to eat and drink as I like, to dress as I like, to say and do whatsoever things may be most pleasing to me, without let or hindrance from any man. All these glorious privileges would be mine if I were either a peer or a peasant. I will do myself the justice to believe that if I had been born into the purple of the peerage I should have done no dishonor to my noble lineage. A lofty title and a fine estate are impregnable fortresses against the assaults of prejudice. Thus powerfully protected I should have snapped my fingers at Mrs. Grundy, and struck out for myself a bold and original course. I should have worn my parliamentary robes in the streets, and gone about in my coronet.

Had I come into the world a peasant baby, fated in after life to dig or mow, to harrow or plough, I should have enjoyed equal, if not still greater liberty. Secure in my insignificance, I should have provoked no interference. I should have been left to follow my own vagary. No one would have thought it worth his while to meddle with me. My grievance is that I was born neither a peer nor a peasant, but simply "respectable." I was born into Schedule D, and so created I am a slave; I must move in a prescribed groove; live in stated style; comply rigidly with certain conventional rules; and, above all things, keep up appearances. If I were not "respectable," I should be the happiest of men; but my respectability clings to me like the poisoned tunic of Dejanira. There are a thousand delightful and perfectly innocent things which I should be rejoiced to do; but "respectability" forbids me. My present desolate and disconsolate condition—for I am lonely as the sparrow on the house-top—is due altogether to my "respectability." Every man forms his own ideal of happiness. Mine is a very modest one. I want to get married. Where, how, when, or to whom is of no great consequence. All I desire is to get married. Oh! to have a blazing fire, and a singing kettle, and a purring cat, and a plate of buttered muffins. Oh! to knock at my hall-door with a bold unfaltering hand after a hard day's work, and instantaneously to find myself clasped in the snowy arms of a lovely being who, covering me with kisses, would exclaim, "Welcome home, my beautiful! my own!" And then what Elysian delight after dinner to puff my pipe placidly by the fire-side—by the "ingle," my Scotch friend Mulfeather calls it—and silently to watch the clouds of

smoke curling gracefully towards the ceiling like man's vain glories and his vainer troubles, while the wife of my bosom—seraphic creature!—would "nag" at me all night long for some imaginary offence, or blow me up as high as the moon for something or another which I could no more have helped than I could have governed the currents of the ocean. To be nagged at and blown up by a beautiful being of your own, who loves you all the while like apple-pie, and whom you love like plum-pudding, is, to my idea, the happiest privilege of matrimony. Married men have assured me that the sensation is something ecstatic; but from these, and all the other exquisite felicities of the married state, I am debarred by my "respectability." Why should there not be a wife of mine sitting in the seat of the scorner? Why should not little children of mine be running all over the house? I'll tell you why. Because I am "respectable." If I had been either a peer or a peasant, I could have afforded to marry; but, being simply "respectable," I cannot do it for the money. It is not on the cards. A woman in a passion with her husband is, to my thinking, the sublimest spectacle under either sun or moon. I know a parson who calls his wife "Circumstances" over whom he has no control, and he assures me that it is a sight for the gods to see "Circumstances" pacing up and down the drawing-room, her lovely form expanding with rage, her damask cheeks crimsoned to the Tyrian die, her marble brow clouded with thunder, her matchless bosom heaving with internal tempest, her starry eyes flashing lightning, and all for nothing; for what is a husband but nothing? Alas, alas! a thousand times alas! that glorious spectacle can never gladden *my* eyes. "I have

no wife," said Othello. No more have I, my sable Moor. I cannot afford the priceless luxury. Being myself "respectable," Society, inexorable tyrant, would insist upon my keeping my wife, if I had one, in a "respectable" style, and I have not the cash to do it. Thus is my "respectability" the rock a-head that forbids a pleasant cruise through life, and dooms me to the shoals and shallows of a bachelor's ignoble destiny. Oh! why am I not either a duke or a plowman? Were I the former I could easily manage to keep my wife in splendor; were I the latter it would not matter three-halfpence how I might keep her; but, being merely "respectable," the female sex exists in vain for me. I am rich enough to live respectably as a bachelor, but what is an elegant sufficiency for a bachelor would be beggary for a married man. Look at the price of coals; look at the price of everything. What business should I have to marry when a bonnet costs £3 3*s*., a silk gown £8 8*s*., a dress-improver a guinea; while perambulators are sold at £36 a dozen? And so it is in every affair of life. Turn where I may, do what I will, I am bowled out of happiness by my "respectability." I hate a chimney-pot hat. I should dearly love to walk down Regent Street either hatless like a Bluecoat boy, or with a soft brown felt of the old "wide-awake" fashion; but it is more than I would dare to do. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to go about in the Highland costume, my head surmounted with the aforesaid "wide-awake" and carrying a naked claymore in my right hand—I should look so picturesque and impressive!—but here also I am confronted by that plague and pest of my life—"respectability." People would account me mad. I have a certain

position to maintain, and maintain it I must, or else be ostracized for a maniac. Then, again, I love to smoke a clay pipe—a nose-warmer—about two inches long, and as black as your shoe; but if a man of my "respectability" were to be seen in the Row with such a thing in his mouth, no decent person would ever care to be seen speaking to him. He might as well pack up his traps and be off to the Antipodes. I never pass through Trafalgar Square without longing to mount the empty pedestal which now looks so lob-sided and inelegant, and to stand upon it with folded arms in an oratorical attitude instinct with statuesque grace, that the B. P. might admire "the glass of fashion and the mould of form;" but, bless you! it were as much as my life is worth to attempt such a thing. Blackguard little boys would deride me for a "guy." Bobbies would brandish their truncheons around my devoted head; and next morning the newspaper placards would be emblazoned with the sensational announcement, "Extraordinary Conduct of a Respectable Man in Trafalgar Square." And yet, when one comes to think of it, it does seem hard—does it not?—that "respectability" should be at such a discount. If one of the pedestals is to be assigned to George IV., surely they might allow the other to be occupied by a respectable man, if only for the variety of the thing. But no; "respectability" is of little worth unless it be accompanied with money, without which, not to speak it profanely, there is, indeed, no true "respectability." "Respectability" cuts down my pleasures and exacts from me circumspect conduct and a rigid demeanor; yet it is an every-day occurrence to find at the bar of justice either some man "of most respectable appearance," who, as the reporters assure

us, "appears to feel his position acutely," or else some case-hardened person who does not seem to care a fig-stalk about it. Meanwhile I am obliged to look demurely down my nose and dare not so much as wink at a pretty girl. If I do, the Society for the Protection, etc., etc., etc., will be down upon me. A donkey-ride at Hampstead, a gallop upon a spavined hack at Blackheath, a halfpenny ice at London Wall, a shy at Aunt Sally anywhere—these are pleasures worthy of the name, but I must not enjoy them. In fact, I am, sex excepted, a respectable Peri mourning at the gates of a Paradise I may not enter. I am fond of my species. I love the human race, especially men, women, and children ; and next to children what I most admire in the world is music. It gladdens my heart and makes my blood tingle for joy to see the children of the poor, waltzing around an Italian organ-grinder or some other noble troubadour who has come here from far distant lands to administer to our delight. I often feel inclined to throw off my coat and dance merrily with these tiny elves ; but I must not think of it unless I would lose caste for ever. What! a "respectable" man dancing in an alley with ragged, unwashed children. Who ever heard of such a thing? I should very much like to ride upon the knife-board of an omnibus, but it is not "*comme il faut.*" It is bad "form." You remember Leech's droll little picture of the powdered footman giving his mistress warning. "What is your grievance? Why do you wish to leave?" asks the mistress. "Oh! mum," replies the flunkey, "master was seen yesterday on the houtside of a homnibus, and I can't think of remaining longer in his service after *that* nohow." For my own part I would go to the pit of a

theatre if I dared; but it is out of the question. A man with downwards of £1000 a-year go to the pit! Impossible! So I have nothing for it but to go to the orchestra-stalls at three times the expense, and sit all night within six inches of a fellow who splits my ears with a trombone. Baked potatoes are, to my thinking, some of the few things worth living for; they tantalize my nose at every street-corner on a winter night; but to me they are forbidden fruit. "Respectable" people don't eat potatoes in the street. Of course not. There is only one man in the world whom I really envy, and that is the man who thwacks the big drum in a huge van drawn by four horses and crowded with little children who are going on a picnic to Epping Forest. I would gladly give a £5 note (of the Bank of Elegance) to take that drummer's post and thwack that big drum all day long; but here again "Respectability" steps in and wrenches the drum sticks out of my hands. In a word, "Respectability" is the bane and bother of my life. I should be twice as happy if I were not half so respectable.

A WET DAY AT LLANGOLLEN.

I WAS still in the cradle when my nurse, a Welshwoman, with a melodious voice and an inexhaustible store of romantic legends, made me acquainted with three personages whom I have ever since regarded with peculiar veneration. They were all country-people of her own—the first being a thief named Taffy, who, as she assured me, came to our house and stole a shin of

beef; the second, a philosophic miller, who dwelt on the banks of the Dee, and whose noble boast it was that he cared for nobody, no, not he, and that nobody cared for him; and the third, a pretty girl called Jenny Jones, who lived in the vale of Llangollen. Every one has his special favorites, whether in the region of veritable history, or in that of poetic fiction; and this matchless trio have been from earliest childhood to the present hour the darlings of my imagination. For their dear sake have I been rambling about the Cambrian mountains for the last three weeks; but I grieve to say that though I have made inquiries in ali directions I have not as yet succeeded in finding the idols of my infantine fancy. Standing on Thursday last upon the Bridge of Llangollen, which, permit me to observe, for the information of architects, is a plain Gothic structure, consisting of four irregularly pointed arches of various dimensions with projecting angular buttresses—my thoughts took a melancholy hue, and a wave of solemn sentiment swept over my soul. (What a lot of S's to be sure!) "Talk of the everlasting hills and the imperishable firmament," quoth I to myself, "and set them in contrast with that fleeting shadow called Man! We need no such potent comparisons. Measure man with the works of his own hands! What is the life that dwells in flesh and blood to the life that dwells in brick and mortar? What is the life of a man compared to the life of a bridge? This bridge upon which I now stand, the admired of all admirers, was built by Anica, Bishop of St. Asaph, in the year of grace, 1350, which, according to Cocker, was 526 years ago. Across this immemorial structure have doubtless passed full many a time and oft Jenny Jones, loveliest of the maids of Llangollen;

Taffy, who was afflicted with kleptomania in bovine matters; and that most stoical of millers who did not care three-halfpence for any human being, and for whom no human being cherished feelings of warmer interest. Where are they now—the village belle, the crafty shin-stealer, and the pococurante mill-owner? Where are they all? They are gone—gone, never to return; but the bridge survives in all the pride and glory of indestructible masonry." So spake I to myself, and so speaking, I wiped away a tear. Suddenly it occurred to me that though these worthy people have vanished like the snow that fell last year, I might, at least, have the satisfaction of visiting their places of burial. At that moment came up a policeman, drest in a little blue authority and looking uncommonly nice in his neat uniform. "Sir," said I, touching my hat, as you know is my wont in such an august presence, and assuming that tone of deference which I never fail to adopt in addressing one of "the force," "will you have the kindness to direct me to the graves of Jenny Jones, Taffy the thief, and the Miller, whose name I do not know, but who is celebrated for having turned up his nose at everybody, and at whom everybody turned up his nose." Pity is it you did not see the expression of the constable's face. He frowned at me so sternly that I verily believed he was going to run me in there and then. "As sure as fate," thought I, "this fellow means to lock me up in Mold jail." I was in a dreadful fright, and had some thoughts of jumping into the Dee; but a happy idea flashed upon my distracted brain. I will try what virtue there is in baccy. "Let me offer you a weed, sir," I observed in the blandest accents. The sun was a fool to the smile that broke over his noble countenance. He

took the weed—indeed, he took two—and, in the twinkling of an eye, we were as intimate as though we had known one another for seven years. He expressed profound regret at being unable to give me any information respecting the final resting-places either of the Beefeater or the Miller, but he assured me that "Jenny Jones" was a road-side public-house not many yards distant, where I might rely on getting a good glass of ale. I asked him whether he had ever read Châteaubriand, and I was amazed to find that he had not. I reminded him that this was the most pathetic season of the year, and directing his attention to the fading glories of the foliage and the desolate aspect of the landscape, I quoted some passages from my favorite French essayist. "Sir," said I, "I adjure you by your brilliant buttons and the numbers flashing so radiantly from your collar, never to forget that a moral character is attached to autumnal scenes, the leaves falling like our years, the flowers fading like our hours, the clouds fleeting like our illusions, the light diminishing like our intelligence, the sun growing colder like our affections, the river becoming frozen like our lives—all bear secret relations to our destinies." In reply to these meditations the policeman made a succession of unearthly noises the most appalling I had ever heard. He seemed to be suddenly bereft of humanity. I thought he must be very ill indeed, and I was about to run for a doctor when I was assured by a by-stander that there was nothing the matter with the man, and that he was only talking Welsh. "Ah! well," said I, "if that is all that ails him, I won't let him off so easily. I will improve the occasion still further." I asked him whether he had ever read Alison's *History of Europe*. He replied in the

negative, adding that "he didn't want to!" All this time, mind you, we were standing upon the Bridge of Llangollen. "Seven-and-twenty years," said I, "have elapsed since Alison the historian visited your charming little town. He stood upon this very spot and surveyed the romantic scene with wonder and delight. It was exactly at this time of the year. Returning to the Hand Hotel, where he found, even as I have found, excellent accommodation at a moderate charge, he recorded his sensations in the following language:— "The impression we feel from the scenery of autumn is accompanied with much exercise of thought; the leaves then begin to fade from the trees; the flowers and shrubs, with which the fields are adorned in the summer months, decay; the woods and groves are silent; the sun himself seems gradually to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power. Who is there, who at this season does not feel his mind impressed with a sentiment of melancholy; or who is able to resist that current of thought which, from such appearances of decay, so naturally leads him to the solemn imagination of that inevitable fate which is to bring on alike the decay of life, of empire, and of nature itself?" "Friend of my soul! what think you of *that?*" "Well, sir," said the policeman, "to be honest with you, I think it is uncommon dry, and not meaning you an ill answer, I don't care to listen to any more of it, so I'll bid you good morning." "Away! away to the mountain's brow!" I replied; and taking me at my word, off he went at a pace so rapid that two minutes had hardly passed ere his manly form was lost to my longing gaze. I don't suppose I shall ever lay eyes upon him again, and I'm sure I don't care a fig-stalk whether or no. No sooner

had the constable disappeared than, by the most tragical of all coincidences, many things occurred to make me feel most acutely the solitariness and discomfort of my situation. The sky scowled ominously, the clouds mustered in dismal battalions heavy as lead and black as pitch, the wind sprang up fiercely from the south-west, and the rain came down in torrents. The river raced away at headlong speed, and the trees upon its banks wrestled wildly with the storm. Next to seeing a woman in a passion, which I hold to be the most magnificent spectacle in the world, I delight to contemplate the emotion of external nature :—

> "In winter when the dismal rain
> Comes down in slanting lines,
> And Wind that grand old harper smites
> His thunder-harp of pines,"

then am I supremely happy. I love to see the ocean flashing and foaming, the rivers rushing in vehement tide, and the oaks writhing in the tempest. Look where I might, as I stood majestic and alone upon Llangollen Bridge, nature was in sublime disarray, and I enjoyed the sight amazingly. The spirit of mischief was a-foot ; the Dee looked as if it was mad ; even the Ellesmere and Chester canal partook of the grand sensation of the hour, and quickened its sluggish pace. I verily believe that since that remarkable rainy period, the Flood, there never was a deluge more overwhelming. It seemed to fall by the ton-weight, and the earth smoked beneath the drenching vibration. There I stood, the only human being out of doors at Llangollen. Yes, there I stood, heroic and devoted, the martyr of duty in thy cause, dear reader. I tried to put up my

umbrella. The wind wrung it out of my hands with no more ceremony than if it had been the last rose of summer. (It was a capital umbrella, allow me to observe, and I paid four-and-twenty shillings for it at Mr. Truefit's, in Burlington Arcade.) It fell into the darkling water beneath, and I doubt not that, at the rate those waters were running, it was at Chester in half an hour. For a moment I was alarmed—not for the sake of my gingham, which is lost as irretrievably as if I had lent it—but because, on glancing towards the summits of Barber's Hill, Eglwyseg Rocks, and Dinas Bran Castle, once the residence of—(how the devil shall I ever spell it?)—Madog ap Gruffyd Maclor, I saw that those lofty eminences were enshrouded with dense rolling vapors, of very peculiar color and formation. "Gracious Goodness!" I exclaimed in an agony of terror, "can it be that my old friend the London Fog has found me out, and pursued me to the fastnesses of Cambria! Wretch that I am! Whither shall I fly from that pest and bother of my life? I will return to mine inn and go to bed." This inglorious design I should probably have carried into effect, though it was only half-past two in the afternoon, but that, on looking up again, I saw that the mists were being rapidly dispersed, and that the mountain-tops stood out once more in well-defined relief against the storm-fraught sky. Soon the blast blew more fiercely than ever, and the rain came down in pattering torrents; but I was nothing moved. So that the London Fog comes not near me I care not. "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage! blow! I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness." Certainly not, so that ye bring not with ye "the London particular." Wet as a fish, I

sallied forth, all umbrellaless as I was, in search of the picturesque and beautiful. Pennant, the eminent antiquarian and tourist, writing about Llangollen eighty years ago, remarked that he knew of no place in North Wales "where the refined lover of picturesque scenes, the sentimental, or the romantic, can give fuller indulgence to his inclination. No place abounds more with various rides or solemn walks. From this central spot, he may, as I have done, visit the seat of Owen Glyndwr, the fine valleys of the Dee, proceed to the source of the river beyond the great Llyn Tegid, or pass the mountains to the fertile vale of Clwyd, and on to the sea." I have followed sedulously in the footsteps of old Pennant. I have seen everything he saw, and a great deal more besides; but if you suppose that I am going to describe it all to you, you are deucedly mistaken. I rambled about the Geraunt, the Pont Cyssylltan Aqueduct, the Du Viaduct, Crow Castle, Wynnstay, Glyn Ceiriog, and Cherk Castle. I sentimentalized in the Cottage of Plass Newydd, where formerly dwelt in inviolate friendship Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, known as "the Ladies of Llangollen," and I trudged wearily along the Canal amid soaking rains all the way to Valle Crucis Abbey, where, after I had been kept ringing in the wet at the western entrance for the best part of half an hour, the door was at last opened to me by an elderly gentlewoman, whom I should very much like to marry, and who told me that in her opinion it was not at all unlikely that the Abbey would one day pass again into the hands of the Catholics. "Look!" said she, "at what has already happened in the Principality. The Earl of Denbigh, the Marquis of Bute, and the Marquis of Ripon have all

become Catholics!" "So, indeed, they have, madam," I replied, "and permit me to remark that I am cold and hungry, and as wet as the sea; so I'll bid you good-bye, and if you should ever meet anybody who asks you for me, be sure to give him half-a-crown." Miss Lloyd promised to do so—bless her dear heart—and we parted. Returning to Llangollen, I had tea at the house of a charming family, to whom I was introduced by an old friend. One member of that happy household, a diamond-eyed little girl of some six or seven summers, lent me a kiss, and nothing that I remember of Llangollen pleases me better than the memory of that kiss. I hope to return it to the lender before long.

In conclusion, let me say that the net result of my experience of this place is that I should dearly love to live here. I have, as the tourists say, "done" Llangollen completely. I know it as well as I know Trafalgar Square, but I like it far better; and if my readers would wish to see me happily settled here for the remainder of my days, they have only to subscribe a sufficient sum for the purchase of a freehold cottage and a competency as modest as myself.

TOWN TREES AND COUNTRY TREES.

IT is of vegetation that we who dwell in a great city most grievously feel the want. Seas, lakes, mountains, towering cliffs, sparkling cascades, and foaming cataracts are no doubt magnificent achievements of

nature, but like all other sublimities they are of rare occurrence; and even though you should live in the country, you may have to travel many miles before you look on them. But the silent, brilliant blossoming of vegetation—its refreshing verdure, and the abundance, variety, and loveliness of its forms, are free alike to all who lead a rural life. To enjoy them, all that is necessary is that you should be remote from cities. It is for the green fields and the waving trees that the heart longs with a filial yearning; for, as a German writer has well observed, "Nothing more clearly expresses the maternal character of nature than vegetation." Wonderful are the works of man—mighty the mutations that his genius can accomplish on the face of the material world—and sad, alas! the havoc that his cunning hand can spread over a smiling landscape. Look at the characteristic life of the age—its vast material development—its irresistible and crushing growth of mechanism—its swarming towns—its distracting mills—its noisy agitation—its chaos of beliefs and unbeliefs. All these things betoken the vascularity of the national heart, and the vigorous vitality of the national mind—but they are not without their alloy. The turbulent cares of commerce alienate us from the tender sympathies of nature; we renounce her gentle sway for an inexorable tyranny, and forsake her fair domains, her warbling woodlands, her shady valleys, and her sunny hills that we may surround ourselves with the heartless conventionalities of an artificial existence. But

> "Man, though he may build a town,
> Could never make a thistle-down."

And if the city proclaims what he can do, the country, with equal significance, prescribes the limits of his

power. "It is pleasant," says Burnet, "to look upon trees in summer covered with green leaves, decked with blossoms, or laden with fruit, and casting a pleasant shade; but to consider how this tree sprang from a little seed, how nature shaped and fed it till it came to this greatness is a more rational pleasure." Here, indeed, is a theme for philosophic inquiry, but it is somewhat beyond the mastery of "a mere molecular accident" like man. The affinity between the destiny of that same "accident" and the doom of trees did not escape the notice of Homer, whose brief meditation on the matter was Englished thus by Alexander Pope:—

> "The sons of men like leaves of trees are found
> Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;"

It is a comfortable thought for poor men to think that there are things which money may not create, and that among them are esteem and love and—venerable trees. Old trees in their living state are beyond the command of cash. Rivers leave their beds, run into cities, and traverse mountains for cash. Obelisks and arches, railways and viaducts, palaces and temples, amphitheatres and pyramids, rise up like exhalations at its bidding. Even the free spirit of man, the only great thing on earth, crouches and cowers in its presence. It passes away and vanishes before venerable trees. It is in the swarming streets, aye, amid the turbulence and confusion of "roaring Temple Bar" itself, that the fancy dwells most fondly upon forest scenery. Then and there it is that you realize in imagination, though not, alas! in vision, the exquisite aspirations of the poet:—

> "In the leafy forest,
> By the murmuring stream,
> Let me lay my weary head and
> Dream! dream! dream!

Gentle Bard, thou child of nature,
With thy heart's full glow,
'Wert thou made in life to struggle?'
Ah! no! no!

Sordid thoughts o'er Mammon brooding
Bidding honor cease;
Malice fell and loud contention!
Peace! peace! peace!

Hollow fraud and deep designing
Dead to Brother's woe,
Cruel rank, more cruel riches!
Go! go! go!

Gently in the leafy forest,
By the murmuring streams,
Let me lull my weary heart in
Dreams! dreams! dreams!"

How delightful! How pleasant—how passing pleasant it would be to have nothing else than this to do and to be well paid for doing it! A strange thought it is when gazing on a great city, to revert, if not in memory at least in fancy, to the time when that mighty aggregation of human dwellings was a forest primeval. His Royal Highness, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, plunges us in a sea of mystic reveries when he stands upon the stage like a melancholy human cypress, and calls upon us to trace in imagination the noble dust of Alexander till we find it stopping a bung-hole! A wild conceit, truly, and full of mournful meditation; but would it be less a romantic effort of intellect to remount the river of time and recall the days when Ludgate Hill was as desolate as Dartmoor? Yet such days there once were. When the postman, with his smart double-knock, was as yet undreamt of—when the express-train, that consummate triumph of science, was still deep in the womb of time

—when sunbeams, busy with painting roses, had not as yet been impressed into the service of painting portraits —and when the electric telegraph had not even struck a poet's fancy as the creation of imagination picturing the impossible, that was the time when Ludgate Hill was in the country,and they who climbed its peaceful breast were free of mountain solitude! That was the time when deep and solemn masses of foliage crowned the summit of the eminence and the trees were resonant with their melodious denizens; that was the time when silver dew still sparkled on the grassy carpet—when the fox glove set up its tapers from the cleft of the stone—when the blue dragon-fly rocked itself on the long blades of grass —when the butterfly winged its golden flight from daisy to honeysuckle, and the bee hummed her busy pæans in the blossoms of the linden. Ah! well may we say it, "*nous avons changé tout cela.*" Lindon and London go well in sound, but very ill in sense. Ludgate Hill is now in the city, and sad is the change that has come over its destiny. For shepherd's crooks we have now the whips of cabmen and omnibus drivers; we have exchanged the song of the nightingale for the insolent chirps of the sparrow; for bees, we have beetles; for butterflies, we have "blacks;" and for silver dew we have a filthy yellow fog. But our human sympathies are not to be thus summarily dealt with. "The feelings can't be smothered like royal children in the Tower," as one of Dickens' heroes has profoundly observed, and like the man in Xenophon who had two souls—a soul for right and a soul for riot, even amid the tumult of traffic and the ceaseless din of commerce our hearts are touched to think of the placid joys of external nature, and our ears are still finely attuned to the harmonies of

wood and wave. There is something pathetically ludicrous in the fondness with which we still cling to the word "garden," as applied to the filthiest and most disgusting purlieus in London. That phrase is associated in our fancy with all that is most radiant in color, and freshest and most delicious in perfume; but how are these expectations realized in such *parterres* as Hatton Garden, Covent Garden, Savile Garden, or Baldwin's Gardens, where tulips are represented by paving-stones, lamp-posts supply the place of geraniums, chimney-pots do duty for roses, and the exhalations from the sewers are substitutes for the south wind "breathing o'er a bed of violets?" To give the name of "garden" to such unlovely localities is, indeed, a bitter mockery. But the saddest satire of all is a tree in the streets of London. The destinies of country and of city trees are strikingly dissimilar; and as there is something happy beyond expression in the former, so is there something unspeakably mournful in the latter. It is scarcely possible to imagine anything in nature more joyous than a country tree. Planted in a spot where sun and zephyr are alike of easy access to it, tossing its tassels in the air and flinging its green flags to the breeze, it is as beautiful an embodiment of life, joy, and happiness as vision can realize or fancy depict. From the roots to the tips of its very leaves there is such a singular interleaving and budding—such a peculiar transition of colors and shapes, as can with difficulty be described by pen or pencil. The waving outline of a tree is in itself one of the loveliest objects in nature; and when the breeze rushes like a spirit of life through the branches, and the light of the sun streams through the delicate curling leaves, rising and sinking like a finely-woven net of azure—language

is powerless to mark the never-ending, ever-changing play of lines and lights with which nature enchants and ever surprises us anew. "Masses of cypress in long avenues have an imposing effect," says Dr. Hermann Masius; "they likewise, whether isolated or in clumps, form a magnificent ornament for the front of palaces, where they gain in real artistic importance in proportion to the boldness and breadth of the horizontal lines of the architecture. In the neighborhood of fountains they possess a peculiar beauty. The rising and falling sheaf of water, the magic play of colors in the myriad drops glittering with sunbeams—the luxuriant green of moss and lily present here a joyous, inexhaustible fulness of life beside the sublime melancholy of death, silent and solitary. But the abrupt contrast is softened by the gushing murmur of the spring, which in its perfect rhythm of coming and going lulls the soul into a state of dreamy yearning." A hawthorn sparkling with blossoms of white and pink, and aromatizing the winds that dally with it, is also a beautiful object. And, oh! what a fairy picture when the hoar-frost hangs its diamonds on the dusky crown of the fir! But this must be in the country. Fir and hawthorn have the same heart-broken aspect in the society of lamp-posts; and a cypress in a city churchyard looks like a vegetable sweep. There is a tree in Cheapside whose destiny is sufficiently miserable to engage in its behalf the sympathies of the civilized world. It stands and has stood for years—unhappy vegetable!—at the corner of Wood Street, where it has witnessed in its lifetime more of row and bother than would suffice for the experience of a whole forest. Its branches are gaunt and haggard, its leaves are crumpled and begrimmed with soot, its trunk is lean

and scraggy, and the smoke of ten thousand chimneys has made its bark as black as your shoe. Little withered twigs are continually falling from it, and its leaves resemble the *papillotes* of a slatternly maid of all work. Sooty sparrows perch about its creaking branches, and rascally town-bred crows were for years accustomed to build their nests upon its topmost boughs. But the crows have had at last the good taste to move into country quarters. Humboldt says of trees that "there is in them an expression of longing beyond belief when they stand so firmly planted and with so circumscribed a sphere of action, while with their tops they move as far as they are able beyond the boundary of their roots. I know nothing in nature so formed to be a symbol of longing?" If this be so, how tragic is the destiny of that unlucky tree in Cheapside! for though its aspirations be with the stars, its conversation is with the chimney-pots. There is not a day I see that tree that I do not feel inclined to address it in the words of Lear to the Earl of Kent in the stocks: "What's he that hath so much thy place mistook to set thee here?" And indeed it is to be wished that the lot of this unhappy vegetable could attract the sympathy of public writers. Poets, who scruple not to sacrifice common sense to the exigencies of their rhetoric when singing the sorrows of "An Old Arm Chair," might surely spare a tear for a living creature, and the most hapless of *all* living creatures—the tree in Cheapside.

"*CHEEK.*"

"CHEEK—The side of the face below the eye." Such is Doctor Johnson's arid definition of one of the most delightful and suggestive words in the English language. Taken in a merely physical sense woman's cheek is enchanting to behold, yet more so to kiss; taken in a metaphorical sense, woman's "cheek" is simply the most marvellous thing in creation. It is lofty as the sky, profound as the sea, boundless and illimitable as space. It is worthy of remark that the word "Cheek" has a talismanic influence on poets, invariably awakening them to strains of sweeter melody and more exalted eloquence. The immortal aspiration of Romeo, that he were a glove upon Juliet's hand, that he might touch her cheek, is a pretty and fanciful thought which will everywhere find ready acceptance with lovers and glovers, but its splendor pales in comparison with the magnificent exclamation of the Montague on viewing the senseless body of his mistress :—

> "Thou art not conquered! Beauty's ensign yet
> Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
> And death's pale flag is not advanced there."

Very sublime, too, and altogether worthy of Shakspeare is the famous simile :—"Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear." Indeed, when we come to analyze that idea, and to think of the greater effulgence which even a diamond of the first water would acquire from contrast with the dusky ear of an Ethiopian woman, we are compelled to admit

that no finer or more expressive metaphor can possibly be found in the whole range of poetry, whether ancient or modern. There are four lines of verse whose parentage I have never been able to trace, but which I would rather have written than dine with the Lord Mayor:—

> "Daughter of the rose, whose cheeks unite
> The differing titles of the red and white,
> Which heaven's alternate beauty well display
> The blush of morning and the milky way."

I have never yet had enough of pancakes, nor do I suppose that I ever shall; but I do declare in all sincerity and truth that if I could conscientiously affirm that I am the author of those lines I would not surrender the glory of such a boast for all the pancakes ever fried. The very thought of a lady's cheeks sufficed to inspire Dr. John Donne, but an indifferent bard on ordinary occasions, to such flights of fancy as would have done no dishonor to the most illustrious poet. Take for example, these noble verses on Mrs. Drury:—

> "We understood
> Her by her sight; her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
> That one might almost say her body thought."

Every one forms his own ideal of supreme beauty. Mine is a woman with cheeks plump and red as a pair of pulpit cushions. Such cheeks look uncommonly well upon the male face also. My Apollo is a man of whom it may be said, in the words of the old song, that

> "He's tall and he's straight as the popular tree,
> And his cheeks are as red as the rose,
> And he looks like a squire of high degree
> When dressed in his Sunday clothes."

The "damask cheek" of the young woman who never told her love, but let concealment prey upon it "like a worm i' the bud," must have been beautiful to behold; but such young women are rare to find now-a-days. I know a girl— But there! the least said is the soonest mended. But most assuredly she is a damsel of whom we may sing in the words of Gray—

> "O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
> The bloom of young desire—the purple light of love."

She loves, sweet pet, and cares not who knows it; nor need she, for she is as good as gold. "Bold in her face and fayre and red of hew,"—to quote the words of Chaucer, and there is no more blameless girl within the four seas of England. She is too good for me, so a better man may have her and welcome.

> "Who can curiously behold
> 'The splendor and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
> Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?'"

asks a poet, once in great renown. And, indeed, beauty's "cheek" is wonderful in more senses than one. A friend of mine—a parson—labors under a strange infirmity of vision and memory, which incapacitates him from distinguishing between any two women. To him they are all alike. In this distressing state of circumstances his wife hit on the ingenious expedient of sticking a wafer on one of her cheeks in the hope that he might thus be enabled to know her from any other member of her sex. It may hardly be believed, but it is none the less true, that even this precaution has not prevented her husband from falling into the mistake of occasionally kissing the wrong woman, an error which

he seems rather to relish. "My dear," he said to his wife the other day, "I have no words to express my admiration of your cheek." "My cheek, indeed!" expostulated the indignant lady, "your own is past endurance." But this anecdote is a digression. Having discoursed thus eloquently upon "cheek" in its physical signification, let us now consider it in its figurative meaning. How the word ever came to be used as a synonym for impudence, audacity, or effrontery is a mystery for philologists to solve. Suffice it to say that it is notoriously susceptible in popular parlance of that interpretation; and that so interpreted it is probably the most precious gift ever bestowed by Nature upon a human being, be that being man or woman. The man who has not "cheek" will never get on. He hardly deserves to be accounted a man at all. He is no better than a mouse. The woman who has not "cheek"—But where's the use of talking! there is happily no such woman. I have written upwards of 700 sonnets on my Belinda's cheek, in the material import of the phrase; but if I were to take to writing sonnets on her "cheek" in the symbolical sense, I might do nothing else all the days of my life, though I should live to the age of Methusaleh. I have not the slightest doubt that a lady I know could find it in her conscience to knock at Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle and ask our Sovereign lady the Queen for the loan of the crown, ball, and sceptre. Having got them—supposing such a thing possible—a sudden access of bashfulness would probably supervene and she would be ashamed to return them.

I never yet met a woman who could tell even a fib. They don't know how, bless their veracious hearts!—

they would not understand how to set about it. Byron is no longer read. So at least the critics tell us, and I ardently hope they are right. He does not deserve to be read. His works ought to be burnt in the market-place if only on account of this infamous *triplet* in *Don Juan*:—

> "Now what I love in women is they won't
> Or can't do otherwise than lie, and do it
> With such a grace that truth seems falsehood to it."

A more scandalous libel upon the sex was never penned since pens were first invented. My experience of women is that they are incomparably more truthful than men. But if more truthful, they are also more cheeky. Man's cheek is at best but a poor pitiful thing in comparison with woman's. I do believe that there are women who could wheedle the whisky out of your punch, or "steal the shoe off a racing horse," as Petronius Arbiter ingeniously suggests. And yet men have done some cheeky things before now. There is no denying that cheek is indispensable for prosperity in the world. Without it, be your worth what it may, you have not a chance of getting on. Modest merit seeks the shade, and, as surely as it does, it is left there. "Fortune favors the brave," which means the cheeky, and no aspiration is more essential to success in life than that of the Scotchman in the play, "May Heaven grant us a gude conceit o' oursels!"

ON THE PLEASURES OF BEING MAD.

WHAT a pleasant thing it must be to be mad! From this rapturous reflection melancholy madness must, of course, be excluded. Insanity of that kind is indeed a deplorable affliction, and may Heaven in its mercy avert it from all whom we love! Nor is there much enjoyment to be derived from that sort of madness which, blowing from the "Nor'-nor'-East," leaves a man wise enough to know "a hawk from a handsaw," when the wind is southerly. Such was Hamlet's lunacy, and a pretty kettle of fish *he* made of it. "*Insaniunt omnes.*" We are all of us mad in a certain sense; but madness of that partial type tends rather to discomfort than felicity. The man who, having in his pocket twopence to buy a broom withal, and in his arm strength enough to use it, is yet so crazy in his aspirations after royalty that he would rather be King of Spain than a crossing-sweeper in Pall Mall, is a lunatic who goes about with his life in his hand, and whose hand will be found empty one of these fine days—

> "Oh! silly, silly Don Alphonso,
> I really wonder how you can go on so!"

Then, again, there are people in private life who, though sane enough on all other points, are yet perpetually prompted to go mad upon some one particular question, in respect of which they act in a manner alike injurious to their own happiness and that of their neighbors. Persons of this semi-delirious class are everlast-

ingly getting into some dismal dilemma. They will sing, though they have neither voice nor ear; ride, though they hardly know a horse from a cow; row, though they scarcely know a boat from a washing-tub; spend their money like water, though when their cash is gone, they will have no other refuge than the workhouse; drink Vienna beer or South African sherry; and undertake the management of other folks' business. though they lack the wit to keep their own straight. To this nondescript class belonged the lady of whom Pope has sung—

> "But some strange graces and odd flights she had,
> Was just not ugly and was just not mad."

Such people are to be pitied, not envied. No. As in learning, so in lunacy, you must drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring. When Dryden uttered the immortal saying, "There is a pleasure, sure, in being mad, which none but madmen know," he had in view not your poor half-and-half lunatic, of whom all that can be said is that he has "a tile loose," or that he hasn't got "all his change," or that he hasn't "all his buttons on," or that there is "a bee in his bonnet," but your out-and-out Bedlamite, who is stark, staring mad, as mad as a March hare, or as mad as that matchless type of insanity, "*in excelsis*," a hatter. I am credibly assured, having made special inquiry on the subject, that Messrs. Lincoln and Bennett and Mr. Christy are simply the three happiest men in London; and as for our four-legged fellow-creatures, what being that ever trod the earth can be half so happy as a hare in the month of March? Whether a hare chews the cud or not is little to the purpose. No doubt he *cud* (could)

if he *chose*, as the old joke goes. Anyhow, chewing or not chewing, he is the gayest, nimblest, jolliest little creature under the sun ; and never is he so gay as when hopelessly bereft of reason, intelligence, or instinct (call it what you will) in the delightful month of March. "There are," says Locke, "degrees of madness as of folly—the disorderly jumbling of ideas together in some more, in some less." In a March hare it is "more," not less, and the result is glorious. The vernal freshness of the air, its pure, bluff, pungent quality, has an ecstatic effect upon the hare, exhilarating his spirits in a marvellous manner, and so "jumbling" his ideas that he attains the very zenith of joyous and irresponsible insanity. How he speeds along to be sure! The wind is hardly so swift. And how picturesque is the scud of his tail as he races with dazzling celerity over meadow and mountain, moss and moor! People who hanker after humanity, and think it a fine thing to be a man, would probably prefer to be a hatter rather than a March hare, but I am not of the number. True, there are people who have tried before now to make a "hare" of me, but they have not gone about it in the right way. There is no use in their trying to make a January or February hare of me. Let them make a March hare of me, and they will do me the greatest service imaginable. The next pleasantest thing to being a hare of that epoch, or a hatter all the year round, is assuredly to be a poet, for your true poets are the wildest of mad men—

> "The dog-star rages ; nay, 'tis past a doubt
> All Bedlam or Parnassus is let out ;
> Fire in each eye and papers in each hand,
> They rave, recite, and madden round the land."

I don't remember to have ever met a man more ecstatically happy than the poet in whose company I had the good fortune to travel from London to Lowestoft on Saturday last. What nonsense he did talk to be sure, and what delight he took in talking it! His verses, which he repeated to me with the fluency of a mountain river after heavy floods, were the veriest rubbish, the arrant "rot," that it ever entered into the most disordered brain of moon-struck humanity to concoct. But what of that? To him they were sublime as the most inspired utterances of Homer or Shakespeare; nay, much more so, for he assured me with the utmost solemnity that both these immortal "bards" were "duffers"—that was his very phrase—and that he alone of all men, living or dead, had ever written a line of genuine poetry. Furthermore, he assured me that he was both the King of England and the Pope of Rome,—a strange combination of dignities; that he owned the sun, the sea, and the moon, and the Great Eastern Railway; that he had only to say the word and the train in which we were travelling would be transformed into a baboon; and that he was the Queen's mother and the Prince of Wales' uncle. I could not quite understand how he made out this marvellous relationship, but he established it to his own complete satisfaction, and evidently derived supreme pleasure from the thought of his illustrious and eccentric lineage. There was no cloud of sorrow or solicitude upon his brow. Who he was or what was his social position, I have not the least idea, but he looked and dressed like a gentleman, had plenty of money—as he proved to me by the frequent exhibition of his well-filled pocket-book—and was to all appearance without a care in the

world. He sang very well indeed; danced about the carriage on the lightest and most fantastic of toes; and continually made remarks which forcibly reminded one of Polonius's criticism upon Hamlet's conversation—"How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of." For example, he laughed uproariously at the notion of Mr. Gladstone, tired of politics, taking to polemics by way of recreation in his old age, and observed that that highly-gifted personage would be much better employed in his favorite pastime of cutting down trees than in setting Christians of various denominations by the ears. He told me that he meant to write to the People's William on the subject, and that he would turn that splendidly-gifted individual into a grass-hopper if he did not mend his ways. Altogether, my strange fellow-traveller reminded me not unfrequently of that witty Bedlamite who, being asked by Tom Brown, of *The London Spy*, why he had not married the woman for whom he had gone mad, replied, with a waggish wink, "Ah! no; I am mad enough in all conscience, but not quite so mad as *that* comes to." There is a good story, too, about a merry little maniac who was asked to explain how it was he had come to be imprisoned. "Well," said he, "it happened thus: I am the only sane man in the world. Everybody else is mad; but as they make the majority, and I am in a glorious minority of one, they have taken a mean advantage of me and locked me up; but I am happier than all the rest put together. I despise them." How pleasant—how passing pleasant—it must be to eat of the "insane root," which, as Banquo assures us, "takes the reason prisoner," and to find that

it transports one into an imaginary world, unvexed by the worries of our work-a-day existence. If you would see true happiness visit a lunatic asylum. There will you find monarchs who have the splendors of royalty without its cares; heroes who have the pomp and circumstance of glorious war without its perils; dunces who are wits, scholars and orators without the fatigue of mental culture; and paupers who, without a shilling in the world, deem themselves, and so deeming, are, to all intents and purposes, richer than the Rothschilds and the Barings.

> "They jest: their words are loose
> As heaps of sand, and scattered wide from sense,
> So high they're mounted on their airy thrones."

Never shall I forget the millionaire with whom I had financial negotiations in a county asylum one day that I visited that noble institution some few years ago. He was a droll little fellow, as round as a water-butt, with very curly hair and piercing grey eyes as sharp as gimlets. Coming up to me with the blandest imaginable smile, he shook me by the hand with as much cordiality as though he had known me from my birth. He asked me my name and profession. I told him both. You should have seen the look of mingled pity and contempt with which he surveyed me from head to heels. "A literary man, indeed! Then you must be as poor as Lazarus. I dare say you haven't three halfpence in the world." I replied that I believed I could manage to muster that number of coins, but that he was right enough in supposing that I was not a rich man. "I should think not, indeed. Why, you look as if you hadn't half enough to eat. But I dare say you

have a wife and nineteen children?" I answered emphatically in the negative. "Ah! well," he rejoined, "it is all the better for the wife and the children that you have neither; but you're as poor as a rat, that's very certain, for I never knew a literary man who wasn't; but, never mind, come along with me and I will get you out of the cold." I followed him to a desk near the window. He took pen and paper, and there and then wrote me out a check for £5,000,000 sterling upon the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. "Take that, old boy," he said, "and be sure that you make them pay you in gold, for their 'flimsies' are only fit to light your pipe with. Good-bye! When you want a million or two drop me a line." I thanked him heartily and off he went. But mark the craft of the man. I was in eager conversation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Emperor of all the Russias and King Nebuchadnezzar, when I felt a gentle tap upon my shoulder. Turning round I saw my benefactor. He winked slyly, and with finger on his lip beckoned me mysteriously into a corner. "Look here," he said, when I had followed him to his retreat; "the richest men in the world may be in temporary want of cash. That is my case. I think I understood you to say you had a matter of three halfpence about you. Lend it to me, and you shall have interest at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum." Dazzled by the prospect of so profitable an investment, I lent him the money. Beaming and blooming all over with happiness, my little friend bounded off like an antelope (fat,) and from that day to this I have never laid eyes upon him. Nor have I heard anything about either my principal or my interest. "Ah!" thought I to myself, "how

many men there be in full possession of their senses who are not half so happy as that hair-brained but sunny-hearted financier!" No wonder that confirmed madmen live to great ages. "They dwell," observed to me the physician of a celebrated asylum, "in an ideal world of their own. Take them out of it; restore them to reason; let them see life as it really is and the sight would kill them. They would die in four and twenty hours." It is worthy of remark that—except, perhaps, in the case of poor Ophelia and one or two others who are the martyrs of melancholia—people who go mad upon the stage are always the merrier for their madness. It is "*de rigueur*" that a demented woman shall come on in a garland of straw, and tear it to pieces before she goes off. She invariably laughs and dances, and looks as radiant as a sunbeam. "There," exclaims Mr. Puff in *The Critic*, when Tilburina has thus demeaned herself to the infinite enjoyment of the audience, "could you ever wish to see anybody madder than *that*." A white dress is also essential to lunacy, and with reference to the more or less haughty airs that the insane assume, whether upon the stage or in real life, it has been observed, drolly enough, that some people go mad in white muslin, others in white satin. But whether in muslin or satin their happiness appears to increase according as—to quote the tall language of Mr. Gladstone—"they rise higher into the regions of transcendental obscurantism." The reason why the mad must of necessity be happier than the sane is, that the latter are subject to those sad vicissitudes of fate of which the former know nothing. Bankruptcy, whether national or personal, and the long train of sorrows consequent on the loss of friends, the perfidy of

foes, and the malignant freaks of destiny are powerless to sadden the soul of him who has made unto himself a fantastic empire, where he rules with undisputed sway. It is the sane who are hurt by the slings and, arrows of outrageous fortune. Your intrenchant lunatic laughs at these things, so true is it, as already quoted, that, "there is a pleasure, sure, in being mad which none but madmen know." The reader is at liberty to draw what inferences he pleases respecting the mental condition of the writer.

RAMSGATE ON HER GOOD BEHAVIOR.

"OH! solitude, where are the charms that sages have found in thy face?" In Ramsgate. "What? Ramsgate, in the Isle of Thanet?" "Yes, to be sure." "You never mean it?" "Ay, but I do." "What!" you again exclaim in amazement, "Ramsgate, the roaring, the rollicking, the rampant! Ramsgate, swarming with excursionists, nigger melodists, brass bands, street preachers, showmen, tumblers, tramps, pick-pockets and tract distributors! Ramsgate, whose streets are crowded with flies and omnibuses, whose sea is cut up into lanes and alleys of bathing machines, and whose sands are all alive with children and nurses! You don't mean to tell me that *that* is the Ramsgate where the charms of solitude are to be found?" "No; I do not. I never said so. You take me up before I have fallen. The Ramsgate you depict is hateful to me as the gates of Orcus. You are

talking of Ramsgate in August; I of Ramsgate in February. The season makes all the difference. In the one case Ramsgate is on the *rampage*, in the other she is on her good behavior. The difference between Ramsgate in August and Ramsgate in February is as nearly as possible that between Philip drunk and Philip sober. Having said thus much in self-defence in the most angelic spirit, I hope you will allow me to proceed upon my way without further interruption." The dialogue being at an end, suppose we glide with equal grace and celerity into the narrative style. For visitors who, loving to escape from the toil and turmoil of London, find enjoyment in tranquillity, there are few more enjoyable places than Ramsgate in winter. In summer it is about as odious a spot as any within the four seas of England; in winter it is delightful. The air, always fine, is now peculiarly delicate. There is not a bathing-machine to be seen, nor yet a "fly" "*ne musca quidem*." There are no donkeys (four-legged); no Punches and Judies; no organ-grinders; no blatant blackguards, with ballooned cheeks, blowing their pestiferous breath into bugles and trombones; no howlers, with blackened faces; no jugglers; no cheap trains; no husbands' boats; and not many husbands. At nine o'clock at night you might fire a cannon down the High Street without hitting anybody. As for the sands—which Mr. Frith has celebrated in effulgent colors as the busiest and most turbulent scene imaginable—why you might walk over them for hours—even as Robinson Crusoe wandered along the shore of his sea-girt isle—and deem yourself fortunate if, like him, you should discern the track of one human foot. The landlords would seem to have the hotels all to themselves; and

as for the lodging-houses, all that need be said is, that if you would learn how to spell the word "Apartments," here you may be sure to acquire the knowledge. This is just the place after my heart. If you want a row stay in London, there you may have the finest row on earth. If you want peace come to Ramsgate in the month of February. All is propriety and repose. A Quaker settlement could not be meeker or more demure. In February Ramsgate is a lamb; in August she is Mr. Powell's lion fed upon balm of aniseed, and looking so fierce that one shudders to think of her. Everything around you now bespeaks calm comfort. There is nothing to shock your nerves, nothing to disturb your equanimity. The Marquis of Hertford, to be sure, who inherits a title redolent of virtue, would do well not to walk through Queen Street, lest he should faint at the sight of a waxen young woman a-lacing of her stays in the window of a milliner's shop known as Granville House; but everybody is not so fastidious as the noble marquis. The lady in question is a very fascinating personage, and the only pity is that she is not flesh and blood instead of wax. But let not the Lord Chamberlain come near her lest she should melt in the fire of his righteous indignation. *D'ailleurs* respectability reigns supreme in Ramsgate, and everything is precisely as it should be. Upon the western cliff is a notification, welcome as the flowers of May, to the effect that, "for the safety of children and the comfort of persons" (children, it is to be presumed, are not persons) "using the promenade, any one riding upon a bycicle will be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law." There is no danger, therefore, of your being run over by Mr. Lowe, M. P., or of your even being

obliged to gaze at the awful spectacle of that eccentric statesman mounted upon his iron steed. Happiness is negative as well as positive, and the mere consciousness that you are anywhere on earth when there is no chance of seeing Mr. Lowe is in itself an abundant source of felicity.

What gladdens the heart not a little in revisiting a country place, and more particularly a seaside resort, after an absence of a year or two, is to observe how well the people look. Unlike us poor Londoners, who change month by month, country people seem only to grow mellower and more mature after the lapse of a few years. They are still hale and hearty, and seem little, if anything, the worse for the wear. There is my friend Mr. Watson, the riding-master—(I call him my friend, because I have never spoken to the man in my life; and if I were to speak to him, it is like enough we might not be friends;) but there, I repeat, is my friend Mr. Watson, the riding-master, whom I have known by sight since I was the height of a bee's knee— or higher; and he still looks as fresh as a two-year old. He is as straight as a steeple, and has as good a seat as ever. The Town Crier has a cold in his nose. He has never been without one, as far as my experience of him goes, and it is more than probable he never will be. His confidential communications with himself, uttered in tones of the softest soliloquy, as he stands, bell in hand, at the corner of the streets still, as of old, appear to cause him the keenest internal satisfaction. I should so like to be a bell-man! Then, again, there is the Harbor Master. How pleasant and genial he looks! as well indeed he may, being the Master of so beautiful a harbor. He grows stouter, decidedly stouter. I

should think that he is now like one of the morning papers, "permanently enlarged," and, to judge from his cheery expression, and bright, florid complexion, I should not wonder if, like a brilliant journal of ubiquitous renown, he had "the largest circulation in the world." Anyhow, he looks uncommonly well, which is the more to be wondered at, "like seeing that right in front of his house is a pillar which a big bully lifts its head and lies." Morning, noon and night the Harbor Master is doomed to gaze upon the obelisk erected by the inhabitants and visitors of Ramsgate, "as a grateful record (so runs the inscription) of the gracious condescension of his Majesty, George IV., in selecting that as his port of debarkation," when he was going to visit his kingdom of Hanover. One can easily understand why any port should be grateful to George IV., for having gone away from it, but when we proceed to read that the people of Ramsgate also reared the pillar in testimony of their thankfulness for "his happy return," we are lost in amazement and indignation. It is to be hoped that our friend the Harbor Master was not taught Latin at school, or that if he were he has forgotten all about it; for, bad as the English inscription on the Obelisk is, the Latin which is upon the side nearest to the Master's dwelling, is still worse. Fancy an honest man being unable to walk out of his hall-door without finding these words staring him in the face :—*Regi illustrissimi Georgio quarto, quem sui unice colunt venerantur alieni*, or, in the vernacular, "In honor of the most illustrious monarch George IV., whom his own subjects regard with peculiar love, and foreigners with veneration!" And this of one of the worst and most despicable men who ever disgraced humanity—a man of whom Moore wrote in verse true as scathing :—

"But go! 'twere vain to curse,
'Twere weakness to upbraid thee,
Hate couldn't wish thee worse
Than guilt and shame have made thee."

If obelisks, teeming with eulogy, are to be raised to Vice, what are to be the rewards of Virtue? I beg leave most respectfully to suggest that the present inscriptions be forthwith erased, and that in their place be substituted a modest statement to the effect that the purpose of the obelisk is to testify the gratitude of the inhabitants and visitors of Ramsgate to the Town Crier for having kept the secrets of the town so honorably for so many years. If this proposal be not carried out, the next best thing would be to take the pillar down altogether, and cut it up into mile-stones. With its present mean and mendacious utterances, it is a disgrace to the town. The basin is full of shipping, but the harbor itself is but thinly tenanted with vessels. The process of dredging would seem to have been discontinued for the present, and at low water it is but too evident that the policy of the people in authority may be comprised in the invitation, parodied from Mr. Tennyson, "Come into the harbor, Mud!" At full tide the scene is as bright and delightful as ever, and still, as of yore, the west side of the pier is the favorite promenade. Bevies of beautiful girls are to be seen walking there, and it would astonish you to observe how many of them wear their hair in a fringe across their foreheads. I am happy to say that I have at last discovered the meaning of this strange fashion. It has been explained to me by one of the loveliest women on earth—"a form of life and light, who seen becomes a part of sight." This matchless being has assured me that it is an understood

thing among her sex, and ought to be as generally known among ours, that a lady who wears her hair in this manner desires thereby to signify that she means to take time by the forelock, and to close with the very first offer she gets. Such is the meaning of the frontal fringe, and bachelors and widowers will regulate their proceedings accordingly. When next you go to the play observe how many fringed ladies there are in the audience. Procure an introduction wherever your fancy is most fascinated—it is no difficult matter ; and, relying on the forelock, be sure of success. And, *à propos* of plays, you must not suppose that the people of Ramsgate are without dramatic entertainment in winter. True, they have no theatres of their own, but, thanks to the enterprise of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway Company, they are provided with ample means of access to the London play-houses. It may seem incredible, but it is none the less—but rather all the more—true on that account, that there are what are termed " theatre excursion trains " between Ramsgate and the metropolis. One of these started at 8.45 A.M., the other day, arriving in town about noon. The enthusiastic playgoers travelling by this conveyance might have seen the pantomime at the Crystal Palace in the afternoon, and that at Drury Lane in the evening, and leaving Ludgate Hill Station about midnight, might have hoped to be home at Ramsgate, say 3 o'clock in the morning. This was assuredly a smart stroke of business, and as remarkable an example of the pursuit of pleasure under difficulties as any on record. And be it borne in mind, to the credit of the railway company, that, not unmindful of the dear price of coal, and everything else as well, they have fixed the tariff at a scale so low as 7*s.* 6*d.* for

the first-class return ticket, and 3*s.* 6*d.* for the second-class, so that people who, though on pleasure bent, have "still a frugal mind," like the worthy Mrs. Gilpin, will find that they can combine economy with enjoyment. What would our forefathers have said had they been told that the day would come when playgoers would be carried from Ramsgate to the London play-houses, and back again—some 160 miles in all—for 3*s.* 6*d.*, and that they would be drawing their own bed-curtains cosily around them in three hours after the curtain had fallen at the theatre? They would have regarded the man uttering such a prophecy as a maniac, and would possibly have sent him to the nearest mad-house, with directions that his head should be shaved with all possible expedition.

But it must not be supposed that the residents of Ramsgate are compelled to go so far as London, however cheaply or however quickly, in search of recreation. Though the place is placid, it is not stagnant. Lonely it is in mid-winter, but by no means desolate. There are gentle excitements worthy ot refined minds. To see Mr. Pearce, the poet, flying a kite upon the sands is so touching a spectacle of the combination of child-like simplicity with exalted genius that it were well worth while to come down here from London, though for no other purpose than to behold the bard thus innocently employed. We are irresistibly reminded of Sir Isaac Newton gathering pebbles on the sea-shore. Then, again, the Vicar illustrates his continental travels by means of dissolving views so artistically contrived that one longs for their dissolution. There are "Readings" for those who, not knowing how to read themselves, like to hear others do so, and there are "Singings" for

those similarly situated in regard to vocal melody. The Aquarium is closed, much to the relief no doubt of the octopus and the sea-horse, who must have been worried to distraction by the frequent intrusions of Lord and Lady Whitechapel last autumn ; but students of zoölogy are not without subjects that will well repay their curious examination. Live soles are to be inspected and even purchased every morning. I caught a cockle at Broadstairs yesterday. I saw a crab walking after the peculiar fashion of his species upon the wet sands near Kingsgate on Sunday morning, and on the following evening I bought a pot of shrimps at Mr. Banger's, in Pegwell Bay. No sooner had I made this purchase than my thoughts took a meditative turn and I began to philosophize. What man is there who has not wished to be some other creature than a man? "I would I were a bird!" says the old song. Have you ever "would-ed" you were a bird, sweet reader mine? I know a man who is a goose, but, ungratefully oblivious of the fact, he still keeps "woulding" he were a bird. It is as though a fellow should keep shouting for his spectacles while they are upon his nose. Professor Wilson longed to be a deer of the desert, some other poet sighed to be an eagle on the mountain top, and one of Shakespeare's gentlemen talks about exchanging his humanity with a baboon; but all these people shoot wide of the mark. They all miss the true type of felicity—a potted shrimp. When one looks around one and sees how full of sorrow and tribulation is human life, who would care to be a man? Who would not rather be a potted shrimp. A sweeter, gentler, nobler, more dignified destiny, it is not in fancy to imagine, nor in words to express. To be a potted shrimp under any

circumstances must be exceedingly nice; but to be a shrimp, potted in one of Mr. Banger's gorgeous pots, with a flaming picture of Ramsgate Harbor or Pegwell Bay upon the lid, were simply such a fate as Mausolus himself might envy. But, not to digress further upon this enchanting topic, it may suffice to say that the zoölogist will find much to delight him at Ramsgate. Finally, Ramsgate has this pleasant peculiarity, that the piers of its harbor are respectively adapted to the comic and the tragic temperaments. If you feel happy, walk upon the east pier and rejoice in the society of the beautiful young women occasionally to be found there; if you are moody and disconsolate, betake you to the west pier, where the significant words "*Perfugium Miseris*—Refuge for the Unfortunate"—are inscribed upon the light-house, and where the chance is as a thousand to one that your shadow will be your only companion—a companion, by the way, who, like the rest of the world, will be sure to forsake you when your dark hour comes on. Thus you will perceive that, be your mood of mind what it may, you can go to no better place than Ramsgate when, as at the present moment, Ramsgate is on her good behavior.

THE ART OF TALKING.

THAT the art of conversation—an art intimately associated with the dignity and comfort of social life—should be so little studied is one of a thousand unaccountable things in an inexplicable world. It is not simply that men and women frequently speak with-

out reflecting, but that even in cases where they may have reflected and adjudged rightly enough as to the wisdom of the words about to be uttered by them, they too often neglect to consider the time, place, and manner of utterance. The absolute truthfulness of a remark is no sufficient justification for it if it had been spoken in a harsh, ungracious tone, at an inexpedient moment, or under circumstances calculated to needlessly hurt the feelings of the hearers. "It is ill talking o' hemp to one whose faither was hanged," says one of the personages in Sir Walter Scott's story of *Rob Roy*, and there is as much philosophy as humanity in the observation. Yet how often do we find that people will hazard the most audacious assertions, in accents the most galling, without ever pausing to consider how they may be wounding the sensibilities or shocking the prejudices of their neighbors? One man will say that he abhors Protestants, a second that he hates Catholics, a third that he execrates Jews (amongst whom, by the way, may be found some of the best of Christians), a fourth that he cannot abide the sight of a Dissenter; and all these virulent persons who give free expression to their respective antipathies, knowing little and caring less, though the very person with whom they may be in conversation should belong to the category thus fiercely denounced. Prejudice is the bane of goodfellowship, and the greatest possible hindrance to the flow of free and friendly conversation. There are, of course, occasions when a man of earnest nature and righteous purpose will at all hazards make fearless profession of his faith, and endure any extremity of persecution rather than abjure it; but such occasions are rare in these days of religious liberty, and most assuredly they do not

arise at the dinner-table. A man may be honest to the heart's core without being rude, and people with views the most antagonistic may, without any violence to conscience, merge their differences in genial oblivion while eating turtle soup or sipping "beeswing" together. Candor and courtesy are strictly compatible, and Virtue is no such tyrant as to exact from her votaries the sacrifice of good manners. Here in England the tide of talk usually flows in a sullen, sluggish current, in places of public resort—railway-trains, steamboats, omnibuses, taverns, etc.,—for the representative Saxon is chary of his speech before strangers, whom he generally regards as enemies. Reversing Shylock's policy, who had no objection to converse with Christians, and only refused to eat, drink, or pray with them, your true-born Briton may address his neighbor thus—"I will buy with you, sell with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not *talk* with you." It is only the tocsin of the soul—the dinner-bell that makes men brightly loquacious. "An excellent and well-arranged dinner," observes one of the most brilliant of modern essayists, "is a most pleasing occurrence and a great triumph of civilized life. It is not only the descending morsel and the enveloping sauce, but the rank, wealth, wit, and beauty which surround the meats, the learned management of light and heat, the silent and rapid services of the attendants, the smiling and sedulous host proffering gusts and relishes, the exotic bottles, the embossed plate, *the pleasant remarks*, the handsome dresses, the cunning artifices of fruit and farina! The hour of dinner, in short, includes everything of sensual and intellectual gratification which a great nation glories in producing." How very true! and what a charming picture! But among the many

elements of pleasure thus eloquently enumerated, not the least important are "the pleasant remarks." Table-talk, bright, genial, witty, good-natured, good-humored, is all-essential to the enjoyment of a good dinner, for civilized beings meet at the festive board not simply to eat but also to converse. In the costly viands set before them there is exquisite provision for the palate, but in the conversation of the guests dwell the feast of reason and the flow of soul. Sectarian prejudice, party spirit, personal and national animosities, are fatal to comfortable conversation; and the man who has not the grace to perceive this, or who, perceiving it, is yet so ill-tempered as to be unable to tone down his fierce dislikes to the requirements of refined society, would do well to stay at home and eat his dinner by himself in the coal-hole. One thoroughly perverse and disputatious man at a dinner-party is enough to damp the spirits and upset the nerves of the whole company. He is sure to start an unwelcome topic, and to propound his views with a pugnacity of manner which will ruffle everybody's composure and play the mischief with everybody's digestion. If you have a corn in the world, he will find it out and trample upon it without remorse. Then, again, there are people who, without any tinge of malice, are yet so wedded to their own opinions that they take a strange delight in contradiction. Say what you will they differ from you. Sydney Smith gives excellent advice to persons thus unhappily afflicted. "The habit of contradicting into which young men, and young men of ability in particular, are apt to fall is a habit extremely injurious to the powers of the understanding. I would recommend to such young men an intellectual regimen of which I myself in an earlier period of my life

have felt the advantage, and that is to assent to the two first propositions that they hear every day, and not only to assent to them, but if they can, to improve and embellish them, and to make the speaker a little more in love with his own opinion than he was before. When they have a little got over the bitterness of assenting, they may then gradually increase the number of assents, and so go on as their constitutions will bear it; and I have little doubt that in time this will effect a complete and perfect cure." Some people there are who, never having submitted to this salutary discipline, appear to take a positive pleasure in challenging your every statement, and dissenting from any proposition, however harmless, that you may chance to lay down. If you venture to remark that Signor Salvini is great as Othello, or that Madame Adelina Patti was in good voice last night, they will either traverse the assertion with a flat negation, or else intimate their disagreement from you in a tone that conveys unmistakably how much they compassionate your intellect, or, rather, your want of it. If you like a particular picture at the Water Color Institute, or anywhere else, they are amused to think what you can find in it to admire. Sir John Gilbert is harsh in color and slovenly in drawing; Mr. Edwin Hayes never can have seen the sea; Mr. Hine knows nothing about the Sussex Downs; Mr. Wymperis is "Coxy," nothing more; Mr. Mogford can only paint Tantallan Castle; Mr. Tenniel has not a particle of dramatic spirit; and as for Mr. Charles Cattermole, he merely follows servilely in the footsteps of his uncle. "*Quels grands hommes! Rien ne peut leur plaire!*" What great men to be sure! Nothing can please them. Unlike Shakespeare's Polonius, and the "*Græculus*

esuriens" of the Roman satirist, who always agreed with the last speaker, these carping critics dissent from everybody. Like the seal, who is only comfortable in a storm, or the Irish tailor, whose fatigue began when he sat down, they abhor quiet. They never seem to be at ease unless when they are roughening and darkening that current of friendly talk which it should be the ambition of every sensible and kind-hearted man to keep as smooth and bright as possible. Deuce take it! Can't they let it pass! The dinner-table does not exact such solemnity of utterance as does the pulpit; nor is there any need to be as punctilious in our statements over Burgundy or Moselle as though we were arguing a demurrer before a Vice-Chancellor. People of this captious temper destroy the charm of conversation, and remind you ever of those cross-grained persons whom you now and then meet in the streets, and who take a queer delight in crossing your path. You move to the right, so do they; you take the left, so do they; you go right in the middle only to find yourself nose to nose with them; till at last they bar your passage so effectually that you have nothing for it but to give them your blessing, and, springing into the gutter, leave them in undisputed possession of the pavement which they will not halve with you.

"That is the happiest conversation," observes Dr. Johnson, "where there is no competition, no contradiction, no vanity, but a calm quiet interchange of sentiment." Just so; but Dr. Johnson, like some other great sages, found it easier to preach than to practice. He was the veriest bear in conversation unless when he found it to his interest to be otherwise. He would brook no competition; he gloried in contradiction; and

as for his vanity, there were no bounds to it. One instance out of many will suffice, as recorded by Piozzi, to show how the philosopher of Bolt Court behaved in society, despite his benignant maxim:—"When his friend Mr. Strahan, a native of Scotland, on his return from the Hebrides, asked him, with a firm tone of voice, what he thought of his country? 'That it is a very vile country, to be sure, sir!' returned for answer Dr. Johnson. 'Well, sir,' replies the other somewhat mortified, 'God made it.' 'Certainly He did,' answers Dr. Johnson again; 'but we must always remember that He made it for Scotchmen, and—comparisons are odious, Mr. Strahan—but God made hell!'" Could the force of ruffianism go further? Yet that was the man who presumed to guide his fellows in the path of courtesy, and who meanwhile was allowed, in right of his arrogance and presumption, quite as much as out of consideration for his learning and ability, to ride rough-shod over society. In our days he would have been chucked out of the window, ponderous as he might be.

Another class of people who spoil the charm of conversation are they who, in their extreme eagerness for display, take the good things out of your mouth, anticipate the *bon mot* they see coming, and cut you short in the middle of a sentence. Such persons prefer monologue to dialogue, and would fain have all the talk to themselves. They disregard Dean Swift's pithy verses which contain the whole art and mystery of conversation:

"Conversation is but carving;
Give no more to every guest
Than he's able to digest;
Give him always of the prime,
And but little at a time;

Carve to all but just enough
Let them neither starve nor stuff;
And that you may have your due
Let your neighbors carve for you."

Your funny man, too, is a great nuisance, the more particularly so, if his fun take the dismal direction of riddles. It will never do to laugh at him; to frown at him were ill manners; a dubious smile, a nod that may be anything, or some atrocious conundrum worse than his own is your only resource. It was my misfortune to sit at a supper-table the other night next to an idiot who, just as the lobster salad was being served around, had the audacity to ask me where Moses was when he blew out the candle. Now, that is the very first riddle I ever heard in my life. Whether I was short-frocked when first I heard it is more than I can undertake to affirm; but most assuredly I could hardly toddle before my nurse confided that miserable conundrum to my agonized ear. Nevertheless, I gave my neighbor to understand—Heaven forgive me!—that his riddle came upon me with all the freshness of novelty, and that I could not for the life of me make it out. Very great, indeed, was his delight. "In the dark, sir; in the dark!" he exclaimed with a jubilant chuckle. I make no pretence to good breeding, but I plume myself upon my benevolence, and I make bold to assert that in thus treating my importunate little friend, instead of pooh-poohing him, or turning up my nose at him, as men of inferior tact might have done, I displayed social philanthrophy of the highest order. But there are bounds to the most celestial charity, and finding that my tormentor was preparing again for the charge, and that I was likely enough to miss my chance of the salad once more

through his confounded riddles, I resolved to choke him off with one that was likely to stick in his throat for the rest of the night. "Pardon me, sir," said I, "it is *my* turn now. Allow me to ask you when is an elephant like a cock robin? Think over it well and don't give it up in a hurry." "I won't," he replied; and to do him justice he didn't. For the remainder of the evening he was lost in an abyss of thought. He sat at the table with knitted brow and fixed eyes in a hopeless reverie, and seemingly unconscious of all that was passing around. It was not until we had all risen to depart that he came up to me and, in a tone of tender supplication, observed, "I cannot guess it. I must give it up. *Do* tell me when is an elephant like a cock robin?" "Never, sir; never," I replied in accents the most emphatic. You should have seen the scorn and disgust depicted upon his face. "He cursed me with his eyes," as Coleridge says. At last he found his tongue and gave vent to his indignation thus: It's most unfair, sir; it's most unfair. It isn't a riddle at all; it's a vulgar *sell*. I bid you good-night, sir," and so saying he snatched up his hat and was gone. He had been a sad hindrance to pleasant conversation for fully an hour, and would have been so to the end, had I not thrown a tub at the whale. An enchanting story is told of Mr. Carlyle. He lately went on a visit to a friend in Scotland, and one day at dinner he happened to have for a neighbor one of those unhappy persons who are afflicted with "a plentiful lack of wit," together with a most intolerable amount of what that genial old parson in Bulwer Lytton's *Caxtons* calls "jabber." This inanity, who seems to have goaded honest Thomas to the verge of madness, innocently records his opinion of the philosopher, as

follows:—"Mr. Carlyle is an extraordinary man; he is a perfect nobody in society; he has no conversation; he takes an interest in nothing. For half an hour I endeavored to draw him out on art; no use. Then I tried him on his own subjects, on literature, history, biography; all to no purpose. The man has no power of conversation whatever. At the end of dinner, after being silent the whole time, he suddenly said to his host, 'For Heaven's sake, put me in a room by myself, and give me a pipe!'" This is delicious. It is to be hoped that the story is true; but if not, the man who invented it ought to go on inventing others like it all the days of his life.

The days are gone when, as in the time of Pope,—

> "Snuff or the fan supplied each pause of chat,
> With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that."

Snuff is gone out or nearly so; the fan finds but little favor with the modern fair; and though singing and laughing happily survive, the man or woman who would now "ogle" in good society would be accounted a Bedlamite and treated accordingly. Debarred from the fantastic resources to which our ancestors had access, there still remains to us one inexhaustible topic of conversation—the weather, and as that becomes more varied and uncertain every year, it still supplies matter for endless diversity of discourse. So true is this that a witty essayist has described the dialogue in English company to consist of "a series of meteorological observations." But, be the subject of our conversation what it may—the weather, politics, art, literature, or science, —whether we indulge in "that abominable tittle-tattle which is the cud that's chewed by human cattle," or

soaring to tragic themes discuss the sorrows and sufferings of "the unfortunate nobleman now languishing in prison at Dartmoor," let us bear in mind these two golden precepts—first to pitch our voices to a conversational key, and secondly to talk in such a spirit of mutual forbearance that every one may have his or her say. Neglect these maxims, and we shall return to the clamorous and chaotic days described by Spenser,—

> "Thus chatten the people in their steads,
> Ylike a monster of many heads."

The skilful management of the voice is indispensable to the true enjoyment of discourse, for where every speaker tries to over-talk the other, conversation degenerates into a mere clatter of tongues. There should be a rule of the road in talking as driving, and nobody should be permitted to pass any other body on the near side. Fancy what the condition of Fleet Street or the Strand would be if there were no such law for the regulation of vehicular traffic. In the absence of a like ordinance, the vocal disorder at a dinner-table would be quite as terrific. Finally, but though last by no means least, never forget that the art of talking is that of listening also. Indeed, there is no more flattering or more refined form of courtesy than that implied by a polite and gentle method of giving ear when others talk. Assume an air of interested attention, more particularly when it is a lady who speaks, and you will one day be surprised to find yourself more popular in society than if you were the most brilliant talker in the world.

HARD WEATHER LONG AGO.

No. 1.

WITH (or without) your kind permission, dear reader, I purpose to ramble back to by-gone times, and devote a few essays to hard weather long, long ago, a theme not without a certain romantic fascination. Livy, in his Fifth Book, tells of a winter so severe that the river Tiber was frozen over—a very singular occurrence in such a climate as that with which Italy is blessed. Ovid, who was contemporaneous with the historian, and to whose magnificent decription of the weather in the Crimea, I shall have occasion hereafter to refer, assures us that while he was in banishment at Tomni, a town in Pontus, it happened one year that all the rivers were locked in fetters of frost, and the Black Sea looked like a boundless expanse of solid marble. He saw it himself, and walked upon it without wetting his feet. What a magnificent spectacle it must have been, especially at sunrise and sunset! Not that the living ocean, with its stupendous voices ; its foaming billows its waving shadow, its feast of color and its flow of light may not be equally beautiful, or perhaps more so, but there is something which approaches the sublime in the idea of traversing the face of the deep, while it is in this state of repose and tranquility—something that awes the imagination to find its mighty hushed, and its exuberant currents mysteriously arrested by that invisible power which, at another season, bids the winds to blow and the waves to roll and swell in uncontrol-

led majesty. In the year 1234 the Adriatic was so frozen that the Venetians went over the ice in carts, and we have the authority of Zonoras for the statement that in the reign of the Emperor Constantine the Pontic Sea was so congealed that people for many miles travelled it on foot, and horses and wagons passed over the *fretum* or narrow part of it. "But withal," he adds, "the summer following was so excessive hot and dry that great rivers and most fountains were wholly dried up, and people and cattle perished for want of water." In the year 821, the Rhone, the Danube, the Elbe, the Seine, were so solidly frozen that for thirty days those rivers were the great highways of their respective nations, and carriages passed as freely over them as on dry land. But not to carry the reader to scenes too distant or eras too remote, let us confine our attention for the present to such winters of historic severity as have occurred in our own country. I propose to pass in shivering review the most famous frosts that have happened in England during the last eight centuries —to depict the aspect of London at those periods, and more particularly to describe the conduct of our old friend "ye River of Thames" under such trying circumstances. The earliest frost of which we can discover any mention in the old English writers as being of peculiar rigor, occurred in 1116. In the spring of that year there was, as the chroniclers assure us, "an eager and a nipping frost." The cold of February was more than compensated by the warmth of August, when "the river Thames was so low for the space of a day and a night that horses, men, and children passed over it betwixt London Bridge and the Tower, and also under the bridge, the water not reaching above their

knees!" The same thing happened in Queen Elizabeth's time; and though on each occasion the bed of the river was crossed by "horses, men, and children," it is to be recorded to the honor of *the* sex (the only sex worth talking about) that there is not in any historian the faintest allusion to justify the suspicion that any lady ever had the ill-taste to make the experiment. From 1116 to 1151 there does not appear to have been any frost of sufficient intensity to justify historic allusion; but Hollinshed has recorded for the benefit of a shuddering posterity that "in the winter of 1152 about the tenth day of December it began to freese extreamlie, and so continued till the nineteenth of Februarie, whereby the river of Thames was so frosen, that men might pass over it both on foot and horsse-back." But this was not the only strange thing that happened in that portentous year, for we are assured on the venerable authority of the same Hollinshed already alluded to, that at Christmas "a fish like unto a man was caught on ye coast of Suffolke." The reader shall have the story in the historian's own antique language:—"At Oreford, in Suffolke, a fish was taken up by fishers in their nets as they were at sea, resembling in shape a wild or savage man whom they presented to Sir Bartholomew de Glanville that had the keeping of the castell of Oreford in Suffolke. He was naked in all his lims resembling the right proportion of a man and albeit the crowne of his head was bald his beard was long and ragged. The knight caused him to be kept certain daies and nights from the sea; meat set afore him he greedilie devoured. He did eat fish both raw and sod. He would not or could not utter any speech, although to try him they hung him up by the heeles and miserably

tormented him! He would get him to his couche at ye settine of ye sunne and rise again at ye rising of ye sunne." The ancient chroniclers then go on to narrate how he was kept for some months at "ye castell" of Oreford but how at last "being negligently looked to" and "not seeming to be regarded, he fled secretly to ye sea, and was never after seane nor hearde of!" This we may readily believe. He was evidently "a very correct young person," as pious people say; and even at this distance of time one cannot but commend the propriety of his proceedings. In the year 1435, in the time of the sixth Henry, "the frost was so extream—beginning about the five and twentieth day of November and continuing till the tenth of Februarie—that the ships with merchandise arriving at the Thames its mouth, could not come up the river; so their lading then faine to be discharged was brought to the city up land." Such and so cold was the weather that our mediæval ancestors had to encounter. "First it *blew* and then it *snew;* and then it *driz* and then it *friz*," as some poetical meteorologist phrases it. Henry VIII. did not bring the summer with him, for in his days also the weather was hard, as well as the times. In 1523, "after great windes and raines which chanced in that season there followed a sore frost which was so intense that manie died for cold and some lost fingers, some lost toes and manie lost nailes besides their fingers so extreme was the rigour of that frost." Nor was his daughter Elizabeth fortunate in matters meteorological. Hollinshed has left us a brief but graphic account of the dreadful winter of 1565. "The one and twentyth of December began a frost which continued so extreamlie, that on the New Year's day even, people went over and

alongst the Thames on the ise from London Bridge to Westminster. Some plaied at the foot-ball as boldlie there as if it had been on the drie land; diverse of ye court shot daily at pricks set upon the Thames and ye people both men and women went on ye Thames in greater numbers than in anie street of ye citie of London. On ye 31st day of Januarie at night it begun to thaw and on ye fift daie was no ise to be seen between London Bridge and Lambeth; which sudden thaw caused great floods and high waters that bare downe bridges and houses, and drowned manie people in England, especiallie in Yorkshire; Owes Bridge was borne away with others." In 1579 there was a felonious frost, followed by a phenomenon very startling in these northern latitudes, yet too authoritatively attested to admit of a doubt as to its actual occurrence. "The Thames over-flowed its banks and not only were boats rowed but fishes were caught in Westminster Hall." "It snowed," writes an historian who witnessed what he described, "till the eight daie of Febuarie, and frised till the tenth and then followed a thaw with continual rain which a long time after caused such high waters and great floods that the marshes and low grounds being drowned for the time, the water of the Thames rose so high in Westminster Hall that after the fall loads of fishes were found in the said hall." Unlucky fishes. Woe worth the tide that landed them in such a place! It is to be hoped, however that they kept clear of The Court of Chancery. Better for them to have made at once for Billingsgate then have ventured into so perilous a region. Among the "Philosophic Transactions" of the Royal Society during that memorable year may be found a letter from a gentleman

in Bristol giving an interesting account of as strange a spell of weather as any on record. "Not exactly a frost, but a freezing rain fell about Bristol on the 9th, 10th, and 11th of December, and made such destruction of trees in all the villages and highways from Bristol towards Wells, and towards Shepton Mallet, and towards Bath and Bruton, and other places of the west that both for the manner and matter it may seem incredible. Orchards exposed to the N.E. were devastated. I weighed the sprigg of an ash tree of just three-quarters of a pound, which was brought to my table; the ice on it weighed sixteen pounds, besides what was melted off by the hands of them that brought it! Yet all this while, when trees and hedges were laden with ice, there was no ice to be seen on our rivers, nor so much as on our standing pools." He then goes on to say that some travellers were "almost lost" by the coldness of the freezing air and freezing rain. "All the trees, young and old, in the highway from Bristol to Shepton were so torn and thrown down on both sides of the way that they were impassable. By the like obstructions the carriers of Bruton were forced to return back. Some were affrighted with the noise in the air till they discovered that it was the clatter of icy boughs, dashed one against the other by the wind. Some told me that riding on the snowy downs they saw this freezing rain fall upon the snow and immediately freeze to ice without sinking at all into the snow, so that the snow was covered with ice all along, and had been dangerous if the ice had been strong enough to bear them. Others were on their journey when the ice was able to bear them in some places, and they were in great distress."

The frost which occurred in 1683–4 appears to have been, to the ruin of all comparison, the keenest and most intense that has ever been known in England. The frost of 1435 was of longer duration, but it does not seem to have approached in severity to that of 1683. Rapin says that during the long frost of 1683–4, which began about the middle of December, and lasted till the middle of February, "the Thames was so frozen that there was another city as it were on the ice by the great number of booths erected between the Temple and Southwark, in which place was held an absolute fair of all sorts of trades. An ox was likewise roasted whole, bulls baited, and the like." A correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, writing to Mr. Urban, a century later, communicates the following memorandum, which he found in his great-grandfather's pocket-book :—"20th Dec., 1683, a very violent frost began, which lasted till 6th of Februarie, in soe great extremitie that the pooles were frozen 18 inches thick at least, and the Thames was soe frozen that a great sheet from the Temple to Southwark was built with shops, and all manner of things sold; hackney coaches plyed there as in the street; there was also bull-baiting, and a great many other shows and tricks to be seen. This day the frost broke; in the morning I saw a coach and six horses driven from Whitehall almost to the bridge (London bridge), yet by three o'clock that day, next to Southwark, the ice was gone so as boats did row to and fro; and the day after, all the frost was gone. On Candlemas-day (2d Feb.), I went to Croydon market and led my horse over the ice at the ferry to Lambeth; as I came back I led him from Lambeth upon the middle of the Thames to Whitefriars Stairs and we led him up

them ; and this day an ox was roasted whole over against Whitehall—King Charles II. with the Queene eat part of it." Another writer who obliged the town with a pamphlet entitled "Modest Observations on the Present Extraordinary Frost," has left some very curious details. "On the 23rd January, being the first day of term, coaches plyed at the Temple Stairs, and carried the lawyers to Westminster on the yce, and thenceforwards the same continued, and whole streets of sheds everywhere built on the Thames, thousands passing, buying, selling, drinking, and revelling (I wish I could not say on the Lord's Day too), and most sorts of trades' shops on the yce (and amongst the rest a printing-house there erected), bulls baited and thousands of spectators. Nay, below the bridge hundreds daily pass. The river Humber (as I am credibly informed), where it is several miles broad, is frozen over, and vast flakes of yce are seen floating on the Downs of diverse miles in length and proportionable breadth." But by far the best description of this singular event may be found in a scarce little book printed that same year by John Waltho at the Black Lyon in Chancery Lane over against Lincoln's Inn, entitled "An Historical Account of the late great Frost, in which are discovered in several comical relations, the various humors, loves, cheats, and intrigues of the town as the same were managed upon the river of Thames during that season." Unfortunately it is written with too little regard to delicacy to admit of its republication in our days, but to the philosophic mind it is valuable as a record of manners, customs, and opinions in an age which, though not very distant from our own, according to the measurement of time, was yet as unlike our own as any two epochs the most remote

imaginable could possibly be. Our business, however, is less with the morality of the volume than with its "yce," and on this subject its information is exceedingly graphic. "Ye frost began about ye 16th Decr., and so sharply set in that in a fortnight's time or thereabouts ye river of Thames, though one might think by the daily flux and re-flux of her twice returning tide in the space of 24 hours and the native course of her own rapid streams was secured against the force of the hardest weather, yet this river beyond ye Bridge of London upwards was all frozen over and people began to walk thereon and booths were built in many places where the poor watermen whose boats were lockt up and could not work thereon for their usual livelyhood made a virtue of necessity and therein retailed wine brandy ale and other liquors which for the novelty of the same very few but were in a short time their customers, and their trades increasing their booths began to increase and be enlarged for the reception of multitudes of people who daily resorted thereunto, insomuch that in a short time roadways were made from place to place, and without any fear or apprehension the same was trod by men women and children; nor were the same only foot-paths but soon after hackney coaches began to ply upon the river and found better custom than if they had continued in the streets which were never in the midst of business half so crowded so that the same became the only scene of pleasure in or about London; the fields were deserted and the river full, and in Hillary Term which soon after ensued it was as usual for the lawyers to take coach by water to Westminster as through the Strand and so public was the river that in a short time it obtained the names of Frost Fair and the Blanket

Fair. A whole street of booths contiguous each to other was built from the Temple Stairs to the Barge House in Southwark which were inhabited by traders of all sorts which usually frequent fairs and markets as those who deal in earthenware brass copper tin iron toys and trifles ; and besides these printers bakers cooks butchers barbers coffee-men and others who were so frequented by the innumerable concourse of all degrees and qualities that by their own confession they never met elsewhere the like advantages every one being willing to say they did lay out such and such moneys on the river of Thames ; nor was the trade only amongst such as were fixt in booths, but also all sorts of cries which usually are heard in London streets were there. The hawkers with their news—the costermonger with his fruit—the wives with their oysters pies gingerbread and such like. Nor was there any recreation in season which could not be found there with more advantage than on land such as foot-ball play nine-pins cudgels bull and bear-baiting and others which on the occasion was more ordinary as sliding in skates chairs and other devizes such as were made of sailing-boats chariots and carrow-whimbles so that at one view you might behold the thriving trader at his shop the sporters at their recreations the labourers with their burdens at their backs and every one with as little concern or fear as if they had trod the surface of the more centred element. And in all places smoking fires on the solid waters, roasting boyling and preparing food for ye hungary and liquors for ye thirsty ; eating drinking and rejoicing in great crowds, as Smithfield in Bartholemew Fare could ever boast." Those were madcap times when wit took the boisterous form of practical joke, and the public humor displayed itself in the

most grotesque evolutions. Of the dare-devil proceedings of the "Sparks," as young men of fashion were then called, our author has left us a description which if not edifying is, at least, amusing. Thus he tells us how they caught a sturdy old beggar-man at Temple Bar, and having plied him with strong waters, compelled him to personate Neptune, and to ride upon the frost in a sledge with a tin pot on his head, and in his hand a pitchfork to typify the imperial trident. Old women who sold dumplings were obliged to stow themselves with their savory wares in wooden bowls, which were pulled along the ice at the rate of ten miles an hour, while country cousins were lured to spots where the ice had been cut away for their especial accommodation. Another "drollery," which the writer narrates with manifest relish, was originated by a certain scrivener, who, being blessed with a scolding wife, enticed her into a booth near the Savoy, to partake of "neats' tongue and a bottle;" but no sooner had the dear unsuspecting soul seated herself at the table than her chair sank into a hole prepared for her reception, and there she was kept up to the chin in water until she had promised reformation—a promise which, I rejoice to say, she afterwards violated on the incontestable pretext that it had been extorted from her by fraud and terror. On the 12th February, 1684, "the ice gave as it were a universal groan and crackt into little pieces, and was in one tide conveyed away and carried with itself the joyful news of its own dissolution to our merchant ships which had been for two months before detained in ye Downs." So ended the great frost of 1684. Let us hope that we shall soon have another like it!

No. II.

The Long Frost of 1683–4 was indeed a frost with a vengeance—a frost of such matchless asperity that we can find no analogy for it, except in the celestial attribute of charity. The witty and popular phrase, "cold as charity," expresses the only metaphor that can do justice to a season of such heartless rigor. Mrs. Commodore Trunnion in Smollett's immortal romance performed her religious duties "with rancorous severity." Now image to yourself the expression of that worthy lady's face as she doled out her bounties to the poor; or, to take a more modern instance, fancy the icy smile that stole over the parochial features of Mr. Bumble, when, after threatening to "call out the millingtary" on Oliver Twist for asking for an additional slice of bread, he at last consented to let the famished urchin have the boon he craved; and then you may have some idea of the wan and spectral effect which a stray sunbeam must have produced as it played over the frozen bosom of "ye river of ye Thames." Those were indeed days,

> "When icicles hung by the wall,
> And Dick the shepherd blew his nail;
> And Tom bore logs into the hall,
> And milk came frozen home in pail.
> When blood was nipp'd and ways were foul,
> And nightly sung the staring owl,
> 'To-Who!'
> 'To-whit! to who!' a merry note,
> While greasy Joan doth keel the pot."

Assuredly, those were cold days—cold, cold, "even as thy chastity,"—thou lovely lady wedded to the Moor;

and yet one delights to read of them. It is like skating in imagination. One lingers lovingly on the antique records of that Siberian winter, and it is no easy matter to pass to other and less trying epochs. There lieth on my table an old broad-sheet, the color of Arabic saffron. It is entitled "A Strange and Wonderful Relation of the Many Remarkable Damages sustained by Sea and Land from the present Unparalleled Frost." Oh, delightful! "By this," says our author—and blessings on his frosty pole!—"may be apprehended ye extremity of ye season; a certain sexton in ye citie of London having a grave to make, and finding ye obdurate impenetrable earth as it had been a rock of solled marble reverberate his forsible stroakes was therefore constrained to have two strong and able working men, giving each two shillings a day, to undertake the same, who with pickaxes, twibills, beetles, and wedges, and two days' hard labour did with great difficulty make it deep enough; so that ye labour of digging only one grave did amount to eight shillings, and the labourers worthy of their hire." Our author goes on to tell what is still more remarkable, how, "solid cakes of ice," of some miles in extent, breaking away from the eastern countries of Flanders and Holland, were driven on the sea-cost of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk;—how "it was also reported that certain skate-sliders upon one of these large ice-plains were unawares driven to sea and arrived alive upon their icy rafts at the sea-coast of Essex;"—how ships in the offing had their canvas and cordage congealed beyond our apprehensions to imagine or chronologies to parallel;"—how great cables of ships on the shore of Lancashire were sawed asunder by the sharpness of the "yce";—how the sea was frozen for a whole mile from the shore at Deal; and finally how the

"yce cut away most of the buoys as well in the south as in the north channel." "Boys will be boys," says the proverb; but here was a remarkable refutation of it. The same writer assures us that the weather was, if possible, still more ferocious in Scotland. "No water was to be had for cattel in many miles, which general complaint will need no other confirmation than from the tongues of ye cattel themselves, who with pitty have been observed to lick ye yce to abate their thirst for want of their fill of refreshing water."

In the north of France the season was equally severe, and sixty persons are said to have died upon the road between Paris and Calais. It is worthy of remark that in the year following (1685) there were copious rains and terrible tempests all over England. On one night in particular there was a paroxysm of storm "on ye river of ye Thames," and contemporaneous writers assure us that for two hours—from two o'clock in the morning till four—"the waves were as high as in the Bay of Biscay." There was immense damage of property. During the remainder of the seventeenth century there does not appear to have been any weather of sufficient severity to justify particular allusion; but the continent of Europe was less favorably circumstanced. In 1691 the cold was intolerable throughout Germany, and the wolves, driven for shelter from the woods and forests, entered the streets of Vienna and attacked the passengers! Passing over the terrific tempest of 1703 as being rather beside the benevolent purpose of the present essay, which is not so much to blow the reader's head off as to freeze the blood in his veins, we come to a year which deserves to be distinguished as "mirabilis," the year 1708–9, when the continent and the city of Paris

more particularly were visited by a winter as severe as was felt in England during our darling frost of 1683–4. Even in some parts of the British Isles the cold was intense. Dr. Derham assures us that though during this frost of 1708–9 several people crossed the Thames at some distance above the bridge, it was only towards low water, when the great flakes of ice which came down stopped one another at the bridge till they made one continued bed of ice from thence almost to the Temple; but when the flood came the ice broke, and was all carried with the current up the river. He further states that though this frost was extremely rigorous in the southern parts of the island, yet the northern felt little of it; and he quotes a letter from the then Bishop of Carlisle dated "Rosa," who says "none of our rivers or lakes were frozen over;" and a letter from a gentleman at Edinburgh, who writes "we had not much frost to speak of, and it lasted not long." It was not until Christmas Day, 1708, that the cold was felt in London with anything like unusual rigor, and no sooner were cakes of ice seen floating on the Thames than a certain Dr. Partridge saw in his mind's eye the whole river as hard as stone, with coaches and six rattling over it at the rate of thirteen miles an hour, and an ox being roasted as in the halcyon days some twenty years agone, over against Whitehall :—

"Methinks I see the Thames as hard as stone,
And beaux and ladies safely walk thereon.
Methinks I see a lawyer in his gown
A picking up of damsels who fall down.
Methinks I see the tents and booths of sin
Too full of fools—no wise men can get in;
While Dumpy Dutchmen with their clumsy mates
Teach English madmen how to slide with skates.

Methinks I see so much of knavish vice
As if May Fair was kept upon the ice.
Bulls, cows, and sheep are brought to please the crowd,
And worser beasts by far are there allowed."

It is clear that our Doctor was somewhat censorious, and deemed his fellow creatures no better than they should be. His allusion to men as "worser beasts" than the so-called "lower animals," calls to mind Mr. Planché's charming old burlesque of *Beauty and the Beast.* The Beast solicits the hand of Beauty; Beauty rejects his suit; and the Beast replies with bitter irony—

"I know I look a beast my dear,
But still my hopes are high;
There's many a girl has wed, my dear,
A greater beast than I,"

which is like enough. But to return to our Partridge. He was one of those worthy folk who see more than lies before them. The Thames presented no such aspect as he predicted, but what is very remarkable and well deserves the notice of the philosophic reader, is that this frost of 1708–9 though less potent for the congelation of water than many other frosts, both before and since, was yet more fatal both to animal and vegetable life than any that has ever been known in this country. An old and anonymous poet who wrote a poem to show that "All things some time feel ease," has observed, that be the weather inclement as it may, still

"The owle with feeble sight
Lyes lurking in the leaves,
The sparrow in the frosty night
May shroud her in the eaves."

But it was not so in the frost of 1708–9. Never was there such mortality, especially amongst birds and in-

sects, as during that winter. In many of the southern counties of England "it would have given you as much as your hands could do to pick up the dead bodies of birds;" while the Essex Marshes were for miles bestrewn with swans, brent, geese, seagulls, sandpipers, red-shanks and curlews—all dead! A country gentleman writing from Sevenoaks the year after to the Royal Society, observes—"Robin-redbreasts, which before the frost were numerous, are since that very scarce about us, only here and there one to be seen. Nay, notwithstanding the recruits in the following summer, yet even still in this succeeding winter their scarcity remains. Larks, also, both wood and sky larks, which used plentifully to entertain us with their melody, became in a manner rarities in our country the following spring and summer; only one here and another half a mile or a mile off. I have lately inquired of the London poulterers, and they tell me they have larks from all parts of England and have not this following year received a quarter, nay, scarce a tenth part of the larks they used to have by 'reason the frost killed them,' as the bird-catchers say." Nor was the havoc less among the insect tribes. The greatest sufferer was the *pediculus pulsatorius*, or death-watch. "Few of them appeared," says the same writer (but who ever heard of their *appearing*), "the following summer; and in places where they used in July to be very sonorous with their ticking noise, only now and then one was heard, a manifest sign of their being either killed or less fertile." But all this was nothing compared to what happened on the Continent. In Italy, whole shoals of fresh-water fish were found lifeless; birds as they flew along fell down dead in Germany; cows in Portugal were frozen to death in their stalls.

Human life was sacrificed in many countries, and men grew stiff and stark and throbless when the spirit of the snow-storm breathed in their faces with his icy breath. Of 120 French soldiers who were marching from Paris to Namur, 80 were found dead upon the road.

It has been stated that the reason of this frost's fatality to the animal and vegetable kingdoms was that temporary thaws, succeeded by intense cold were of continual recurrence; but the precise amount of credence to be attached to this explanation is a question for professional readers to determine. The next frost of any importance that happened in England was in 1715–16, when the glories of Frost Fair were renewed upon the Thames. The river was frozen over for several miles; booths and stalls were erected on the "yce," and an ox was once again effulgently roasted "over against Whitehall." Dr. Derham observes that "the true cause of the freezing of the Thames that year was not barely the excess of the cold, but the long continuance of it"—an opinion not unworthy of the crystal-headed philosopher from whom it emanated. But be the cause what it may, it is very certain that the effect was delightful to the Cockneys. The river was as usual the head-quarters of popular diversion; and fun and festivity were of universal prevalence upon its congested waters. Gay has celebrated the event in spirited and melodious verse:—

"O, roving muse! recall that wondrous year
When winter reigned in bleak Britannia's air,
When hoary Thames, with frosted oziers crowned,
Was three long moons in icy fetters bound:
The waterman, forlorn, along the shore
Pensive reclines upon his useless oar;
See harnessed steeds desert the stony town
And wander roads unstable, not their own.

Wheels o'er the harden'd waters smoothly glide,
And graze with whitened track the slippery tide.
Here the fat cook piles high the blazing fire,
And scarce the spit can turn the steer entire.
Booths sudden hide the Thames, long streets appear,
And numerous games proclaim the crowded fair.
So when a general bids the martial train
Spread their encampment o'er the spacious plain,
Thick rising tents, a canvas city build,
And the loud dice resound through all the field."

But fairs even on *terra firma* await the fiat of destruction, and how shall there be permanence for a fair that's holden on the "yce?" Forbid it all the laws that govern this changeful and perishable planet!—

"See now the western gale the flood unbinds,
And blackening clouds move on with warmer winds;
The wooden town its frail foundation leaves
And Thames' full urn rolls down his plenteous waves;
From every pent-house streams the fleeting snow,
And with dissolving frost the pavement flow."

A thaw is a wretched spectacle. It looks as though Nature were in process of dissolution, and the whole world coming to pieces. From so dismal a scene we turn with pleasure to 1739–40, when there was "a remarkable long and severe frost," which appears to have extended over the Continent. The lowest degree of the thermometer observed by Lord Charles Cavendish, in Marlborough Street, was thirteen degrees on the 5th of January, on which day, says the *Gentleman's Magazine*, it was observed to be ten at Stoke Newington. "Ye river of ye Thames" was "at its old lunes" again. The frost, which began on the 24th December, lasted nine weeks, and "a multitude of people," says Smollett, "dwelt on the Thames, and a great number of booths

were erected on it." During that winter there was, near Leicester, a column of ice ten feet long and three in diameter, "the several natural flutings and cavities whereof were very surprising." In the parish of Ipstones, near Cheadle, in Staffordshire, there was another pillar of ice ten yards and three-quarters high and twelve in breadth, occasioned by the dripping of a rivulet down a rock. During that merciless season there was published in the magazines a "Petition from the River Thames to the Lawyers at Westminster," which is so droll in conception, and so cleverly sustained throughout, that even at this distance of time it may be read with advantage. It runs thus:—

"*To the Venerable Sages of Westminster Hall.*
"*The Humble Petition of the River Thames,*
"*Sheweth,*

"That your petitioner was last Xmas, to the great surprise of all in his neighbourhood, arrested in his bed by a couple of boisterous and mischievous bailiffs whose names are North and East. Those unmerciful creatures seized upon all his goods and movables; have, in strict durance ever since, closely confined him, and at the same time kept him exposed all this rigorous season to the cold, so that he fears he shall lose the use of his limbs.

"That those unrelenting ministers of punishment have also treated him with the utmost contempt and violence; have even made a public show of him; have called in heaps of ragamuffins to trample upon him; and, what is worst of all, have forced a numerous family which he used to provide for to beg in the streets.

"That the afflictions and distresses of your petitioner

were by means aforesaid so affecting and moving as in one night to have turned him as grey as a cat.

" That the grief of your petitioner who has ever distinguished himself for being serviceable to his country, is greatly increased upon reflecting he is so far from being as usual useful to the public, that he is become a burden and nuisance to it.

" That your petitioner intends as soon as he can obtain his liberty to go to sea along with a squadron of observation which is to guard the Channel, where he is resolved to signalise himself and show his public spirit by serving without pay or recompense.

" That your petitioner is not conscious of having ever been guilty of a crime that deserved so severe a punishment ; but acknowledges that he did some time ago, out of curiosity, in a very rude and abrupt manner, whilst the courts were sitting, enter Westminister Hall, and by so doing, did, though with no malicious design, spread a general panic and threw matters into a great confusion. For this misdemeanour your petitioner humbly apprehends that, as the cause was not cognisable by any of the courts, their application has been made to the supreme court of judicature, and this severe process has thereupon issued and been served in manner aforesaid.

" Your petitioner therefore humbly prays in consideration of his past services, and of those he may do in future, that application may be at once again made for a stop to be put to these rigorous proceedings and that he may recover his liberty."

This pretty and fanciful squib will not suffer by contrast with the sallies of modern humorists.

No. III.

THE winter of 1739-40 was one of the keenest that history takes note of. "It was full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness," as Shakespeare phrases it. Cold blew the wind, and ill betided the wretch who was in a condition to say with Canning's knife-grinder, "My hat has got a hole in it." Those were days when the integrity of a man's hat, and of his shoes, and of all his other raiment should have been, even as Cæsar's everlasting wife, "beyond suspicion." Aye, of a verity, those were days not for hats only, but for wigs as well, and eke for "comforters" as our grandmothers, whom we do love though we may not marry, delight to call them. But though that winter was very severe in England, as was evidenced by the fact that ye river of ye Thames was "arrested in his bed," as he himself most piteously complained, the cold was felt much more acutely in other countries. In more northerly latitudes it was little less than homicidal. Not to multiply instances of its singular austerity, it will suffice to glance at the state of things in Lapland during that unmerciful winter. An English gentleman who resided at that time in the town of Torneo, and corresponded with the *Gentleman's Magazine*, has left us a graphic picture of the sufferings of the Lapps. If they opened the door of a warm room, the external air instantly converted the vapor of it into snow, whirling it around in white vortices! If they went abroad, they felt "as if the air were tearing their breast asunder." The solitude of the streets was not less than if the inhabitants had all

been dead ; "and you might often see people who had a leg or arm frozen off." Sometimes the cold, which was always intense, increased by sudden and violent fits, which were often fatal to those who were exposed to them. Sometimes there rose sudden tempests of snow still more terrible. "The wind seemed to blow from all quarters of the compass at once, and drove along the snow with such fury that in a moment all the roads were lost." The roaring of the night-wind, as it swept on invisible wings over the face of the snow-prairie, had a tone of unearthly sadness, and sounded like voices from the unseen world. It is scarcely conceivable that such scenes must not have appealed powerfully to the fancy, or that the general dejection of nature must not have found a sympathetic response in the heart even of the least imaginative spectator. How forcibly are we reminded of Ossian's fine description :— "Sad Bragéla calls in vain. The heathcock's head is beneath his wing. The hind sleeps with the hart of the desert. They shall rise with the morning's light, and wander through the sparkling fields. But my tears return with the sun, my sighs come on with the night." Yet the gloom of the outer world was not for long ; for "as soon as night had fairly set in," observes our author, "fires of a thousand colours and figures lit up the sky as if designed in a country accustomed to such brief durations of day to supply the absence of the sun in this manner." And then he goes on to describe the glories of the aurora borealis, and the motion of the northern meteors which, with the elegant fancy of a poet, he compares to the waving of a pair of colors in the air. On such nights the mercury had usually fallen in the thermometer to forty degrees below freezing-point, so

the reader may imagine at what a cost of physical comfort the admirer of nature must have quitted his fireside to gaze upon the splendors of the be-jewelled sky!

The next year that possesses any meteorological peculiarity of sufficient interest to invite attention was 1749. The winter of that year does not seem to have been marked by peculiar rigor, but summer indeed "set in with its usual severity." On the 16th of June ice was taken up in large pieces; peas in the gardens were blasted, and even ferns on Hampstead Heath were shrivelled up. "The like was not remembered by the longest-lived man," says a contemporaneous writer, who here gives us the first glance we have yet obtained of that oblivious veteran "the oldest inhabitant." The walnut trees in Hyde Park were almost killed by the frost; and at Stockport, in Cheshire, there was ice upon the river, "so that people skated on the same." Moore tells us, in 'Lalla Rookh,' of a young man so very valiant that

> "He knew no more of fear than he who dwells
> Beneath the tropics knows of icicles;"

a couplet, by the way, for which Luttrell proposed to substitute

> "He knew no more of fear than he who dwells
> In Scotland's mountains knows of knee-buckels;"

Yet a summer such as that of 1794 might have dismayed the most dauntless of travellers. Eurus and Boreas seemed to have been upon their good behavior during the next three years, but the "Transactions of the Royal Society" record a remarkable frost in the winter

of 1753-4. The thermometer varied forty or fifty degrees in twenty-four hours, "the cold coming, as it were, by fits in an unusual manner." On the last night of that year the glass fell at Bath to thirty degrees below freezing-point, a thing unprecedented in England. The frost lasted from December 30th to February 6th, exactly five weeks, and nowhere was it felt with such severity as at Norwich.

Mr. William Ardeton, an inhabitant of that ancient city, has bequeathed to posterity some observations which may be read with interest by those who are curious in weather-lore. He assures us that the "watery parts of a glass of ale" froze in thin flakes, and the spirituous part remained unfrozen between them; upon being drained off this part was to the taste nearly as strong as brandy, and had a high flavor of the hop. "The finger being spat upon, and pressed upon a flat piece of iron in the open air, was immediately frozen to it so firmly that if it had been hastily plucked away the skin would have been left behind; and to fill the cup of our wonder, "the ice was sometimes the eighth of an inch thick for several days together on the inside of windows in rooms where a blazing fire was kept." That was what young gentlemen with blue lips and vermilion noses, who affect to like cold, would in our day call "seasonable weather." The winter of 1760 was mild, or comparatively so, in England, but dreadful in many parts of the Continent. At Bareith the cold was as great as in 1709; birds dropped down dead as they were flying in the air; sentinels at Leipzic were frozen to death on their watch; and trees were hardened to the obduracy of rock! In 1762–3 there was a month of very hard weather in England, and the Thames was

frozen over so as to bear carriages, but there is no record of a frost-fair. In 1766 the barometer played all manner of unaccountable vagaries, alternately freezing and scorching people, and trifling in the most heartless manner with the noblest feelings of their nature, as the sentimental novelists say. The summer was warm and serene, almost beyond precedent, but the winter would have done honor to Greenland. We find it narrated in the *Annual Register*, for the bewilderment of all succeeding ages, that at eight o'clock in the evening of a Saturday in July, "the man who laid a wager to cross the Thames in a butcher's tray set out in the same from Somerset Stairs, and reached the Surrey side with great ease, using nothing but his hands; he had on a cork jacket in case of any accident." Upwards of seventy boat-fuls of spectators were present on the occasion, and it is said that £1,400 was staked in wagers on the successful achievement of this wonderful feat. Well, to be sure! in what perilous and ridiculous positions will men be content to place themselves rather than undergo the drudgery of an honest calling! One man goes up in a balloon, and comes down more rapidly than is consistent with dignity; another puts his head into a lion's mouth, the law of probability being that he will leave it there; a third walks on the ceiling like a fly, and occasionally descends like a man, thereby illustrating the truth of the old gentleman's saying in Petronius Arbiter—*minores quam muscæ sumus*—we are less than flies; a fourth crosses the river in a butcher's tray! —and all to avoid the monotony which waits upon every-day pursuits. Now, in all human probability, the man who crossed the river in a tray was a married man and the father of a family, and think what a humiliating

position was this for one who had given hostages to fortune! But it is greatly to be deplored that contemporaneous writers should not have had a clearer apprehension of their duty than to have left us such imperfect particulars respecting this adventurous hero who set his life upon a tray. "Who was his father, who was his mother, who was his sister, who was his brother?"—as the song asks, but fails to answer—and under what circumstances did he perform his singular achievement? Was he a long man or a short one?—and in what manner did he navigate his craft? From the fact that the tray is distinctly described as a butcher's tray, we infer that it cannot have exceeded the ordinary size of such articles, else would it have been unfit for a flesher's purpose; but how did our wooden Leander stow himself away in it? Did he stand on it after the manner of a tree, or sit in it after the manner of a man, or lie in it after the passive fashion of a leg of mutton, or coil himself up in it after the example of a cat? How strange, how sad that historians should have left us without one iota of information upon any of these all-important points! But since it is vain to speculate where there are no data for conjecture, let us bid farewell to the butcher, and say a few words about the winter of the same year. Of all the winters ever known it was probably the most eccentric. Its strange variety of temperature and the wild vicissitudes of its weather, seem to place it beyond the range of precedent. There seemed to be a disposition in the elements to do all manner of inconsistent things at one and the same moment. Thus it was thundering in one place while it was freezing in another. On the 2d of January the tide rose so high in the River Thames that the damage done by it was

estimated at £50,000. A few days after, the river was frozen, and the snow in the valley of the Thames was so deep as, of course, to exceed the mnemonics of the oldest inhabitant. On the night of that same 2d of January, there was a prodigious fall of snow in Edinburgh, and on the night following came thunder, lightning and tempest. On the Cotswold Hills "there was a disposition in the air to rain and freeze simultaneously." "At Birdlip on Thursday night a peacock, belonging to Mr. Biggs, was frozen on the branch when it was at roost; the branch broke, and in the morning the bird was found dead with the cold, and the ice congealed to its tail weighed 100 lbs." "People on the other side of the hills, towards Herefordshire, inform us," wrote a country gentleman from Cotswold, "that it was shocking to hear the clashing of the trees and to behold the devastation that it made." Mr. Bainbridge, of Bolton, attempting to cross the Ulverston Sands on horseback, on the 29th of January, was caught in the frost-fog, and wandered about till the flood tide came in and surrounded him. He killed his horse in galloping backwards and forwards in hopes to escape the tide, but he still kept his saddle, and after floating for five hours on the surface of the water, he was at last descried by two youths belonging to the sloop *Providence*, from Milnthorpe. Motionless and benumbed with cold, he was still seated on the dead horse. The sailor boys went out to his rescue in a boat, towed him to the side of the vessel, hoisted him with a tackle on board, stripped him of his wet garments, clad him with their own clothes, poured brandy down his throat and, perceiving signs of returning animation, put out in their boat again, though the sea was running "mountains high,"

and rowed him on shore, after which they carried him in their arms, for half a mile, to the nearest public-house! Noble, gallant boys!—would that we knew your names. But it is of little consequence. You have gone to your eternal rest, and He who "causeth the wind to blow and the waters to flow"—He who "giveth the snow like wool and the hoar-frost like ashes," but in whose smile there is perennial sunshine, has given you a reward compared with which the honors and dignities of this world are less than worthless.

It was a woeful winter that of 1766–7, and the sufferings of the poor are terrible to read of. Postillions were frozen in their saddles; wagons and stage-coaches were "snowed in" on all the great roads; the post-boy who carried the mail from Bradford to Rochdale was with his horse frozen to death. At Horsham, in Sussex, a great flock of larks settled in the market-place so frost-starved that many of them were taken up by hand; inundations in Scotland were so great that they are talked of to this day. "In profound darkness in the midst of the water, husbands were carrying their wives in their arms, others threw children to the first house or bed to which they were admitted." "To a bystander free from danger, says a writer in the *Scot's Magazine*, "perhaps never was there revealed a more awful or more stupendous sight. The waves were prodigious and the noise truly dreadful. The appearance of the Old Fort, to the south-east of Gun's Green, which forms the entrance to the harbor, seemed only one continued cataract of great extent, and in appearance a hundred fathoms high." A farmer near Sunerdale, going after some sheep that were missing during the snow, took with him a bottle of rum and a small

glass. When he found them, some seemed just dying with the cold, to every one of which he gave a little of the rum. To those that seemed least affected he gave none. What is most remarkable, and what we would especially recommend to the notice of Sir Wilfrid Lawson is, that "he got all that had taken the rum safe home, but some of the rest died by the way." The weather was equally severe on the Continent, but the limits of this article will not allow me to mention any other event connected with the weather in foreign countries, but these very memorable ones—that the Danube was frozen over at Coblentz, a thing that had not happened since 1670, and that the Sound was so completely congealed that the communication was open with Sweden on the ice. In 1776, ten years later, there was a winter of extraordinary rigor in various parts of Europe, but there does not appear to have been any cold of exceptional severity in England until 1789, on the 12th January, in which year, "ye river of ye Thames was again frozen over, and a young bear was baited on the ice opposite Radcliff, which drew multitudes together, and fortunately, no accident happened to interrupt the sport." During the same month, as I find recorded in Mr. Urban's venerable volumes, thirteen men brought a wagon with a ton of coal from Loughborough, in Leicestershire, to Carlton House, as a present to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. As soon as the coal was emptied into the cellar Mr. Waltje, clerk of the cellar, gave the men four guineas, but when the Prince was informed of it, "His Highness sent them twenty guineas more, and ordered them a pot of beer each man." "They performed their jour-

ney, which is 111 miles, in eleven days, and drew the wagon all the way without relief." But the poor creatures did not make much by their movement after all, for when the cost of the coal and of their shoe-leather, and of their keep on the road was deducted from the twenty-four guineas, there was not much to divide among the thirteen. Another occurrence of that memorable winter seems sufficiently absurd to deserve a passing allusion. One dismal dreary morning of December, when the snow was at its snowiest and the ice was at its iciest, two footmen, who had a quarrel about a well-made, straight-made, plump-made, stout-made housemaid, met in a field near Haverstock Hill, on the Road of Hampstead, for purposes of mortal conflict! They were armed with pistols, and changed shots without the slightest injury to either party. At length they agreed "to make it up," and walked off the field as sound as they had entered it. No harm would have been done were it not that their respective masters unfortunately got wind of the matter, and discharged them, "telling them that they had made fools of themselves, and that it was only people of quality who were privileged to murder one another." There were other severe winters in England during the eighteenth century, but none of sufficient asperity to require a detailed notice. The most remarkable were those of 1796 and 1797, which are celebrated, not for their continous rigor, but rather for the occasional occurrence of days which it makes one shiver to think of. Thus we learn that on Christmas Day, 1796, the cold in the New Road was twenty-one degrees below freezing-point, and the frost remained for hours upon the windows of rooms in which fires

were constantly burning. But let us pause. This is frigid reading, but let the reader keep up his spirit, remembering the melodious maxim of the poet—

> "What! though the frost
> Reign everlastingly, and ice and snow
> Thaw not but gather!—there is that within
> Which, where it comes, makes summer."

No. IV.

It is a striking illustration of the progress of education in recent times, and of the more ample diffusion of useful knowledge by means of the printing press, that whereas it was only at the cost of great labor and extraordinary research that I could obtain the historical materials from which to construct a narrative of the famous frosts that occurred in England from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries, no sooner have I arrived at those which happened in the nineteenth century than materials accumulate upon my hands with such rapidity and copiousness that my embarrassment is that of a child at a feast, who can with difficulty make up his mind to which of the many dainties that surround him he shall first address himself. Mine, in fact, is what our Gallic friends call *l'embarras des richesses*. So many historians throng around me that it is not easy to decide to which of them I should give the preference; but on the whole it is perhaps as well to select William Hone as my guide, philosopher and friend on the present occasion. The reader will under-

stand, therefore, that it is on the authority of the statements made by that laborious and conscientious author that the following account of the great frost of 1814 may be said mainly to depend.

It would appear then that the celebrated frost of 1814 was preceded by a fog which fell on London like a huge pall, on the 22d of December, 1813. It is described by Mr. Hone as "darkness that might be felt." Cabinet business of great importance had been transacted, and Lord Castlereagh left "the village," as Cobbett used to call this mighty Babylon, two hours before, to embark for the Continent. The Prince Regent, proceeding towards Hatfield on a visit to the Marquis of Salisbury, was obliged to return to Carlton House, after being absent several hours, during which period the carriages had not proceeded beyond Kentish Town, "and one of the outriders fell into a ditch." Mr. Wilson Croker, Secretary of the Admiralty, on a visit northward, wandered likewise several hours in making a progress of not more than three miles, and was likewise compelled to put back. On most of the roads, excepting on the high North Road, travelling was attended with the utmost danger, and mail and stage coaches were everywhere brought to a dead lock. On the 28th, the Maidenhead coach, coming to London, missed the road near Stratford Bridge, and was overturned. Lord Hawarden was among the passengers, and was severely injured. On the 29th similar accidents occurred to public vehicles in all parts of England; and the Birmingham mail took six horses and twelve hours to get as far as Uxbridge, where it had to give up the journey as a bad job. The short "stages,"—as coaches were then called—in the neighborhood of London, had two

men with links, running by the horses' heads. Pedestrians carried lanterns and flambeaux, yet frequently lost themselves in the most frequented and best known streets. Hackney-coachmen mistook the pathway for the road, and often did not discover their mistake until the crash of broken glass apprised them that they were half-way through the window of a shop. On New Year's Eve the fog was worse than ever. "In some districts of the town the lamps were utterly invisible; in others they looked like farthing rush-lights." Coachmen led their horses by the head, while boys went before with blazing torches. There was no such thing as driving from the box. "The shouting of male foot-passengers, who were afraid of being run over, and the screaming of women, who in their bewilderment usually took the very course that was most likely to ensure that end, were terrible to hear." At last the fog, which had continued day and night for a week, cleared off; then came a snow-storm which lasted for forty-eight hours; and then came the famous frost. And now locomotion on other legs than your own was brought to a violent termination. You might slide, you might skate, you might roll about as you pleased, but there was no such thing as being conveyed in a carriage, or riding on horseback! Not a vehicle to be seen in the streets of London! From many buildings icicles a yard and a half long were seen suspended. The water pipes to the houses were all frozen, and it was with difficulty that a supply of water could be had even by means of plugs in the streets. Skating was pursued with great avidity on the canal in St. James' Park, and the Basin, as it was then called, in the Green Park. The sweep, the dustman, the drummer, the beau, gave evidence of their skill in

skimming over the icy lake, and claimed the approving smiles of the belles who viewed their movements.

> "Nimbly, swiftly off they go,
> With sport above and death below."

In Hyde Park a more distinguished order of visitors crowded the banks of the Serpentine. Ladies, in dresses of rich fur, bade defiance to the wintry winds, and ventured on a surface frail and brilliant as "the glass wherein they viewed themselves." Skaters in great numbers executed some of the most difficult movements of the art, to universal admiration. "A lady and two officers, who, to the music of a fine band, performed a reel with a precision scarcely conceivable, received ap plause so boisterous as to terrify the fair cause of the general expression, and occasion her to forego the pleasure she received from the amusement."

> "The Hyde Park river—which no river is—
> The Serpentine—which is not serpentine—
> When frozen every skater claims as his
> In right of common, there to entertwine
> With countless crowds, and glide upon the ice.
> Lining the banks, the timid and unwilling
> Stand and look on, while some the fair entice
> By telling 'Yonder skaters are quadrilling,
> And here the skaters hire the best skates for a shilling."

On the 20th of January the snow came down—to use a sublime and beautiful simile—"like everlasting hokey pokey." On Finchley Common, by the fall of one night, it lay to a depth of sixteen feet, and the road was impassable, even to oxen. At Maidenhead Lane the snow was still deeper, and between Twyford and Reading it was mountainous. Accounts say that on parts of

Bagshot Heath description would fail to convey an adequate idea of its situation. The Middle North Road was hopelessly impassable at Highgate Hill. The accounts from the provinces read now like what travellers tell us they have seen in Siberia and Lapland. The Cambridge mail-coach, coming to London, sank into a hollow of the road, and remained with the snow drifting over it from twelve o'clock at night till nine o'clock in the morning, when it was dragged out by fourteen wagon horses. The passengers, who were in the coach the whole of the time, were nearly frozen to death; that they were not altogether so is little less than a miracle. In Scotland the frost was still more severe; but what is very remarkable in the history of this extraordinary event, is, that the cold, which at its height was probably as great as had ever been experienced in any part of the world, was preceded by a period of singular warmth. The mildness of the weather during the greater part of December was almost unprecedented. Bees were abroad on the 17th and 18th, flying about the hive "as busily as they commonly are in spring." "The rooks in Dumfriesshire," says the *Scot's Magazine*, "were fighting about their nests in the manner they usually do at the time of pairing, previous to their beginning to build. On Christmas Eve great numbers of trout were rising at the fly, and some were caught with minnows. The thrush was heard singing on the 21st, and the blackbird on the 23d, a very uncommon circumstance." But all this was only "the current's smoothness ere it dash beneath," as the poet says; for the frost set in with ferocity on the 28th, and continued for many weeks. At Kelso, the Tweed was completely frozen over, and "an excellent and *hot* dinner was served in a tent on the ice to a numerous and

respectable company." Among the toasts, as we find them recorded in the Scottish periodicals of the time, were the following:—"General Frost, who so signally fought last year for the deliverance of Europe, and who now supports the present company." "Both sides of the Tweed, and God preserve us in the middle." Among the guests was an old man who was present at the last entertainment given under similar circumstances that took place in the winter of 1740, when an ox was roasted on the ice. The honest veteran declared his delight in finding that, after a lapse of seventy-three years, "the present generation had by no means degenerated from their ancestors in the essentials of good cheer, good fellowship and hospitality." But if the frost was severe in England and in Scotland, it was still more so in Ireland. So completely suspended was the intercourse between Dublin and different parts of the interior that on the 17th of January no fewer than 1500 country mails were due in the metropolis. "It is like a blockaded town," writes a gentleman who resided at that time in Dublin, "and begins already to experience in the midst of a profound peace the miseries and distresses of a besieged city." The number of deaths from cold and want was greater than at any other period, unless at the time of the plague. But to return to London, "the best place in summer, and the only place in winter," as Dr. Johnson was accustomed to call it—we find that our old friend "ye river of ye Thames" was meanwhile hardening his heart, to the infinite delight of the Cockneys, who, as usual, congregated in merry groups upon his frozen bosom. On Wednesday, 2d of February, "the whole world looked as if it were petrified," to use the words of a contemporaneous wri-

ter. The Serpentine and the New River were alike, as hard as iron, and icicles hung from every tree. Then were the glories of Frost Fair renewed in all their pristine splendor. The grand "Mall," or walk, extended from Blackfriars Bridge to London Bridge; this was named the City Road, and was lined on each side by persons of all classes. The Fair continued for a whole week, and pleasant is the memory of its revels. Kitchen fires were blazing in all directions, and all manner of edible animals, from an ox to a rabbit, and a goose to a lark, were turning on numberless spits. Sheep were also roasted whole, and the meat was sold at a shilling a slice, and called "Lapland Mutton." The inscriptions upon several booths and lighters were humorous and whimsical. One of them ran thus:

"This shop to let. N. B. It is charged with no land tax or even ground rent."

Eight or ten printing-presses were erected, and numerous pieces commemorative of the frost were printed on the ice. Among the effusions issued were the following:—

FROST FAIR, 1814.

"You that walk here and do design to tell
Your children's children what this year befel,
Come, buy this print and it will then be seen
That such a year as this has seldom been."

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

"Friends, now is your time to support the freedom of the press. Can the press have greater liberty? Here you find it working in the middle of the Thames, and if you encourage us by buying our impressions we will keep it going in the true spirit of liberty during the frost."

Upon another booth built upon the ice was written this droll advertisement:—

"Notice.—The proprietor of these premises would be happy to let them on a building lease. Apply to Mr. Frost."

On Thursday, February 3, the number of adventurers had enormously increased. Swings, Merry-go-rounds, booths, tents, dancing-rooms, skittles, ninepins, and even donkey races were among the scenes and appliances of diversion which everywhere met the eye. Thousands flocked to this singular spectacle of sports and pastimes. The ice was "like a plane of solid rock," and presented a most picturesque appearance; the view of St. Paul's and of the City, with a white foreground and misty perspective, had a very singular effect, and "in many directions mountains of ice upheaved presented the rude interior of a stone quarry." The watermen profited exceedingly, for they demanded of each person a toll of twopence before admitting him to feast his eyes upon the radiant attractions of Frost Fair. Ah! it was fine fun while it lasted, but it was too good to last long, and, like everything else that is pleasant in this fleeting world, it was over too soon. In the matter of freezing and thawing the ancient and ever-to-be-venerated river of ye Thames has physiological peculiarities precisely similar to those which distinguished the respectable old tailor of whom we were wont to sing in our nursery days:—

"Take an old tailor and squeeze him,
And rub him over with cheese,
And put him out on a frosty night,
And 'tis ten to one that he'll freeze."

So far so good; nothing can be pleasanter; but alas! and a-well-a-day! look at the sad reverse of the picture—

> "Bring him in in the morning,
> And rub him over with straw,
> And set him before a blazing fire,
> And 'tis ten to one that he'll thaw."

Like enough, and so it happened to ye river of ye Thames on Monday, 7th February, 1814. The wind, which had been veering towards the south for some hours past, at last set fairly in for that point, and the sun shining forth at mid-day in unclouded splendor made it soon painfully evident that it was all over with the frost. Thousands of disappointed spectators thronged the banks; the watermen looked forlorn and dejected; and many a 'prentice on fun intent went home with a heavy heart as he observed that nothing now remained of the famous Frost Fair but its memory—its blessed memory which to the end of time will smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

> "Diffugere nives, redeunt jam gramina campis,
> Arboribusque comæ;
> Mutat terra vices; et decrescentia ripas
> Flumina prætereunt."

It was probably on the night of the thaw that the following woeful apparition, the like of which had not been known since the days of Captain Smith and the unfortunate Miss Bailey, revealed itself to the tortured imagination of a sleepless poet:—

> "Twas silence all! The rising moon
> With clouds had veiled her light;
> The clock struck twelve, when lo! I saw
> A very chilling sight.

Pale as a snow-ball was its face,
Like icicles its hair,
For mantle it appeared to me
A sheet of ice to wear.

Though seldom given to alarm,
I' faith I'll not dissemble,
My teeth all chattered in my head,
And every joint did tremble.

At last I cried, 'Pray, who are you?
And whither do you go?'—
Methought the phantom thus replied,
'My name is Sally Snow;

My father is the Northern Wind,
My Mother's name was Water,
Old Parson Winter married them,
And I'm their hopeful daughter.

I have a lover, Jacky Frost,
My dad the match condemns;
I've run from home to-night, to meet
My love upon the Thames.'

I stopped Miss Snow in her discourse,
This answer just to cast in;
'I hope if John and you unite
Your union won't be lasting.

Besides, if you should marry him
You cannot prosper well O,
For surely Jacky Frost must be
A very slipp'ry fellow.'

She sat her down before the fire,
My wonder now increases,
For she I took to be a maid
Then tumbled into pieces

For air, thin air, did Hamlet's ghost
His foremost cock-crow barter;
But what I saw, and now describe,
Resolved itself to water."

So ended the great frost of 1814, with which concludes this record of "Hard Weather Long Ago."

THE DELIGHT OF GETTING INTO THE COUNTRY.

THERE is one thing, and one only, that can reconcile a sensible man to a residence in London, the same thing that reconciles a prisoner to his dungeon, the blessed hope of getting out of it. In these days of rapid locomotion, when change of scene is a blessing within the reach of almost everybody, and places once deemed to be at an impracticable distance are made easy of access, even to people in humble circumstances, it is painful as difficult to realize to the imagination the sufferings of our forefathers, who, with very rare exception, were doomed to dwell all the year round in this immense city. The proportion of citizens who could spare either the time or the money to travel into the country by mail or stage coach was numerically insignificant. Pleasure trips were out of the question, or nearly so. Few dreamt of going out of town on other occasions than those of inexorable business; and then, if the journey were of any great extent, it was no unusual practice for the traveller to make his will before he set out. The vast majority of Londoners were immured within brick and mortar

from January to December. They were in the same sad predicament as Tom Hood, who complained that *his* black-bird was a sweep, and that day after day he saw the sun sink behind a chimney-pot instead of a purple hill. Our ancestors whose cruel destiny it was to dwell in the metropolis were outcasts from Nature. In vain, all in vain, for them did the rivers glide, the seas flash and foam, the trees wave in the breeze, and the flowers bloom in the sunshine. They were forbidden

> "To see the country, far diffused around,
> One boundless blush, one white impurpled shower
> Of mingled blossoms; where the raptured eye
> Hurries from joy to joy."

That was a spectacle for rustics alone. Your trueborn Cockney knew nothing about it. We live in happier times, and have abundant reason to be grateful that the modern appliances of science have brought within our reach opportunities of pleasure and sources of enjoyment denied to all preceding generations.

But man is a graceless, thankless, inconsistent creature, that is the fact of it. The discontent prevalent on all hands proves him to be such. Towns-people affect a noble scorn of the country, and country-folk pretend to hold green fields in supreme contempt. We are frequently reminded of the man whom Smollett met at the dinner of authors, and who had contracted such an antipathy to the country, that he insisted upon sitting with his back towards the window that looked into the garden, and when a dish of cauliflowers was set upon the table, he sniffed up volatile salts to keep him from fainting. "Yet this delicate person was the son of a cottager, born under a hedge, and had many years run wild among asses on a common." How vast the

difference between an "exquisite" of that fantastic type and honest Squire Bramble in *Humphrey Clinker*, who, after spending a day or two in London, exclaimed, with virtuous indignation, "Everything I see and hear and feel in this great reservoir of folly, knavery, and sophistication contributes to enhance the value of a country life in my estimation." Miss Winny Jenkins, in the same incomparable story, expressed with equal heartiness her distaste for the dissipations of the great metropolis, declaring that "for her part, she regarded the pleasures of London as no better than sour whey and stale cider, when compared to the joys of the New Jerusalem." It may be that both the squire and the spinster regarded the question in a somewhat fanatical spirit, and that their opinions are therefore to be received with a caution essential for the qualification of excessive zeal. There is no denying that great towns have done good service before now to the causes of liberty, learning, and civilization. "Yes, I bless God for cities," writes Dr. Guthrie; "I recognize a wise and gracious Providence in their existence. The world had not been what it is without them. The disciples were commanded to 'begin at Jerusalem,' and Paul threw himself into the cities of the ancient world, as offering the most commanding positions of influence. Cities have been as lamps of light along the pathway of progress and religion; within them science has given birth to her noblest discoveries; behind their walls freedom has fought her noblest battles; they have stood on the surface of the earth like great breakwaters, rolling back or turning aside the swelling tide of oppression; cities, indeed, have been the cradles of human liberty; they have been the radiating active centres of almost all

Church and State reformation. Having, therefore, no sympathy with those who, regarding them as the excrescences of a tree or the tumors of disease, would raze them to the ground, I bless heaven for cities." This is very eloquent, and, in a certain sense, very true; but the fact remains that "God made the country, and man made the town," and admitting to the fullest the great services rendered to the human race in the aggregate by the assembling together of vast masses in common centres of population, it still stands to reason that the country must be more salubrious and more delightful than the town, and that if you would strengthen your health, exhilarate your spirits, refine your fancy, and exalt your imagination, you must repair not to streets lanes, and alleys, but to verdant valleys, majestic mountains, and luxuriant woodlands. "*Cela va sans dire.*" "That goes without to say," as our lively friends on the other side of the Channel are wont to phrase it:—

> "Blest silent groves! O may ye be
> For ever mirth's best nursery!
> May pure contents
> For ever pitch their tents
> Upon the downs, the meads, the rocks, the mountains,
> And peace still slumber by the purling fountains."

Such was the gentle aspiration of Sir Walter Raleigh, and what man of sense is there who will not say "Amen" to that sweet prayer?

What exasperates one beyond all patience in this age, when there are so many facilities for men and women becoming familiar with the delights of the country, is to observe how prone people are to run down those delights, and to express their preference for the artificial joys of the town. It is the commonest thing in the

world to hear it said how dull and monotonous the pursuits and pastimes of the country must be in comparison with the gay careers and brilliant excitement of London. What nonsense! In Nature, and in her alone, is there infinite variety. The aspects of seas, rivers, and landscapes, of groves and glades, of hills and dales, is everlastingly changing. The scenery of the sky, which is even more picturesque than that of the earth, and which can be effectively contemplated only in the country, is subject to ceaseless and instantaneous mutations. Cloudland is a series of veritable dissolving views, revealed under such marvellous conditions of lights and shadows as the pen of no poet, the pencil of no painter, however inspired, have ever adequately depicted. No two flowers in a garden, nay, more, no two leaves upon a tree, no two blades of grass in a field, are precisely alike. Then consider the number and diversity of rural sports,—hunting, shooting, fishing, deer-stalking, coursing, racing, rowing, cricketing, skating, and a hundred manly diversions besides. Yet they talk about the sameness of the country! What can be more irksome, what more monotonous than a great city? From rosy morn till dewy eve,—but no, it will not do to paint the London day in such colors, for in London the morn is not rosy, nor is there the faintest semblance of dew in the eve. Say, rather, from clammy dawn till foggy night, what do we hear and see? The same never-ending, still-beginning uproar of traffic. Interminable lines of houses, every brick alike; myriads of chimney-pots, all of the same hideous shape; lamp-posts by the thousand, all of one identical form; policemen clad in coats so absolutely similar that every man-jack in the force looks like the twin-brother of his comrade,—long,

lanky Guardsmen hardly distinguishable the one from the other; omnibuses, "hansoms," and "growlers," each of a rigidly-uniform type; barrel-organs, and brazen bands, half-a-dozen of them together, playing the same confounded tunes in half-a-dozen adjoining streets, these are the objects that horrify the senses of vision and hearing in the modern Babylon. All this is bad enough in the winter, but in summer it is intolerable. The summer sunshine which glorifies and beautifies the country, giving splendor to the flowers, scattering molten gold over the cornfields, and painting the meadows with delight, only serves to intensify the ugliness of the streets of London, and to make them more uncomely and more uncomfortable than ever. Everything around you looks hot and arid. The various statues with which the mighty city is disfigured, but notably George III., with his pig-tail; George IV., in his blanket; the Duke of Wellington, in his drawers; Mr. Peabody sitting cross-legged in his arm-chair, and all the busts at which the world grows pale, assume an air of positive repulsiveness when the sunbeams play upon them, lighting up their hideous features, and ungainly forms with a distinctness which makes one envy the blind. You take a ticket to ride from the City to any West-End station,—say, to that most unsightly and inelegant of places, Westbourne Park,—by the Underground Railway, on a lovely summer day. Suppose, just for argument's sake, that you arrive safely at your destination, and have escaped the dreadful fate of being wedged between the footboard and the platform in the wild hurry of the porters, what are your sensations when you get out of the train? Why, you feel as though you had been breathing all the most pestiferous odors in the

world, and chewing lucifer-matches ever since you left Bishopsgate. You walk from the Bank to Charing Cross, and what are your experiences? The pitchy stuff they put upon the wooden pavement sticks to the soles of your boots like glue; the hell broth from the asphalt-pots well-nigh suffocate you; Temple Bar looks as if it would come toppling about your ears before you can get through it; and you reach Trafalgar Square, only to be poisoned by the fumes from the rotten water in the fountains, or to fall headlong into the pits which the gas-men are digging for their own destruction and that of all the world besides. Such is the condition of London in the golden month of September. Yet there are creatures who, claiming to be human, prefer London to all other places. Oh! for the country, the fresh, pure, fragrant country, rich in delicious perfumes, and resonant with delightful melodies.

"How bright and beautiful the sun goes down
O'er the autumnal forests! The wide sky,
Cloudless, is flush'd with that purpureal dye
Which gave the Tyrian loom such old renown.
The radiance, falling on the distant town,
Bathes all in mellowing light; and softened, come
Through the lull'd air, the song of birds, the hum
Of bees, and twitter of the martins brown;
All things call back the bosom to the beat
Of childhood, and to youth's enchanted maze;
And hark, the rail, amid the golden wheat,
With its craik—craik! Oh! sad it is, yet sweet,
To look through Memory's mirror on the days
Which shone like gold, yet melted down like haze!"

These are my sentiments—would they were my words; and being, as I am, of like opinion with the poet, I have no feeling but pity for the man who, having

it in his power to go into the country, would prefer to remain in town. He who lives all the year round in London has good reason to regret that he is a man, and to wish that he could be any more reasonable animal. Such an unlucky wight is in a condition to sympathize with the aspirations of Robert Burns, "There are just two creatures that I would envy—a horse in his wild state traversing the forests of Asia, or an oyster on some of the desert shores of Europe. The one has not a wish without enjoyment; the other has neither wish nor fear." Contrast the fate of either being with that of a man who would live in London in preference to the country, and blush for your species.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

STARTING suddenly the other day from a deep reverie, into which he had fallen after dinner at a roadside inn far away from town, the O'Finnigan O sprang to his feet and exclaimed in tones of thunder, "Ireland her own, or the world in a blaze!!" So saying, he dealt the unoffending table a terrific thwack with his clenched fist. I bethought me of the disputatious churchman who shouted out in his dreams, "*Conclusum est contra Manichæos!*"—"It is decided against the Manichæans;" I also recalled to mind the anecdote about the brilliant historian who smashed a decanter into sparkling fragments while he was in a brown study at the Star and Garter in Richmond. I was dreadfully alarmed. That Ireland should have "her

own," whatever that may be, I have not the slightest objection; but the appalling alternative of the universe in flames filled me with dismay. "What *can* be the matter now, my O'Finnigan, with you and your country?" I ventured to inquire, in accents as soothing as I could command. "You have got a Duke of Connaught; *cannot* you be quiet?" My gentle joke only served to deepen his despondency. "Ah!" he replied, "you may laugh. They laugh who win; but neither I nor my native land ever wins. I was at my old game again—building a castle in the air. That castle was the freedom and independence of old Ireland. It was a goodly structure and fair to behold, but, as usual, it has come toppling about my ears. My bleeding country is doomed to Saxon bondage; she is a lovely white-robed angel, quivering upon the spear of despotism." In vain did I remind him of the praise and pudding bestowed with equal liberality upon a countryman of his, Sir Garnet Wolseley; in vain did I call attention to the large space taken up by the harp in the national ensign, and to the enormous size of the shamrock in the recent illuminations. He was not to be comforted. So, finding him inconsolable, I retreated, as is my wont, in perfect order upon myself, and lighting my pipe, set about building aërial castles of my own, for which I fondly expected a better fate than had attended those of my sorrow-stricken Hibernian. And a very pleasant time I had of it; for, more fortunate than my friend, I am bound in candor to confess that some of the most blissful hours of my life have been spent in operations of atmospheric architecture. The experience of most men would, I imagine, lead to a similar, result. The realities of life are too often cold, hard

and stern; but there is no limit to the joys of a sumptuous imagination. Fancy has a realm of her own, to which the weary and disappointed may at all times resort in happy assurance of finding their pleasures beyond the reach of cruel fortune. How delightful to escape from the toil and turmoil of every-day existence, from its ignoble cares and sickening solicitudes, its odious fogs and filthy fray, into that Canaan overflowing with milk and honey, the fairy-land of poetic thought!—

> "A pleasing land of drowsyshed it is,
> Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye,
> And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
> For ever flushing round a summer sky."

Sir Walter Raleigh, indeed, affects to pooh-pooh such unsubstantial structures. "These be but castles in the air," he says, "and in men's fancies vainly imagined;" yet I cannot help thinking that he would have found more comfortable accommodation even in edifices of that visionary description than in the more massive masonry of London's Tower. But all men should speak of the world, whether in its actual or in its ideal phases, as they have found it. "Every one is as God made him, and oftentimes a great deal worse," is the philosophic remark of Sancho Panza; and in whichsoever of these two conditions he may be, let him, at all events, report honestly of that which he may have seen, heard or felt. So reporting, I should say that the building of castles in the air is of all occupations at once the most innocent and the most delightful. "*Crede experto.*" I speak from experience; for, though I have never meddled with material brick and mortar, I

doubt whether there be in all England another man who has been so largely engaged in the erecting of aërial mansions. Such edifices are inexpensive ; and they have this additional advantage that you may build them after what plans and designs you please, and furnish them in the most superb or voluptuous fashion according to your taste. You need have no apprehension that your architect will send in a drawing too costly and elaborate for your means, that your builder will exceed his estimate, or your upholsterer ruin you with an exorbitant bill. Independent of them all you are free to construct your castle where and how you please, and to deck it out with such appointments of drapery and decoration as may be most suitable to your convenience or enjoyment.

Who shall presume to set bounds to your luxurious imagination? It is nothing to the purpose to say that your castles in the air "come toppling about your ears," as the O'Finnigan O would phrase it. Of course they do. Such is the fate of every castle, whether material or immaterial. Everything comes toppling about our ears sooner or later, till at last we topple ourselves. It is but a question of time ; but it is not in Fate, malignant though she be—to rob us of the dear delight we enjoy while employed in the construction of our *Châteaux en Espagne*. What though they go down with a rush at the slightest whiff of adverse wind, the sweet memory of the pleasure we tasted while building them survives their fall, and is a joy for ever. Whether life would be worth having if we were deprived of the privilege of castle building, is a question on which I have not as yet finally made up my mind ; but, as at present advised, I am inclined to decide the proposition

in the negative. Everything palls in fruition; nothing comes up to one's conception of its charms; felicity dwells in anticipation, and in that alone. Oh! the bliss ineffable of casting aside the bonds of illness and the trammels of a mean estate, and soaring at a bound into the blue empyrean of poetic fancy, there to revel in such affluent delights as the combination of health and wealth can bestow. At my little rural lodgings I had a fine spell of such rapture. Methought that I had succeeded to a noble fortune and was strong as Hercules and as healthy as a German Spa. I was lord of myself—that heritage of fun. I had nothing to do, and was well paid for doing it; I was free to roam whithersoever I might please; to go a fly-fishing to Norway, or a pig-sticking to India, or a fox-hunting to Hampshire. There was no mountain from Primrose Hill to the Himalayas that I was not at liberty to ascend. I had books and pictures beyond all counting, and my fellow-creatures, so far from snubbing me, or turning up their saucy noses at me, as is their customary practice, treated me with the utmost distinction, and seemed only to live to administer to my pleasure. I called the Heir Apparent "Wales," I chucked the royal children under their royal chins, and they seemed to like it; nay, more, my Sovereign Lady the Queen regarded me with peculiar favor, and styled me the most illustrious of her subjects. Brown was nowhere. Mine was the most brilliant equipage in the Row, mine the most spacious box at the opera, mine the brightest and best of everything. I had two shirts and as many pairs of stockings. Beautiful damsels waited upon me; they sang to me and danced to me, and read my poems aloud, and assured me that they perfectly understood

them, which is more than I would dare to affirm my self. To quote the magnificent language of an American journalist, in describing the wedding of Miss Grant and Mr. Sartoris: "A delightful murmur of conversation was maintained by the ladies, occasionally broken by a zephyr of laughter that only served to ripple the murmuring waves and melt out with a musical echo." And talking of weddings, I had my pick and choice of the most magnificent girls in England, which means the most magnificent in the world; and I was at liberty to wed any one I pleased of them—or any number of them I might fancy, for the matter of that. I got peerages for my friends. I ran over my enemies as though they were mice; and, in a word, I did just as I chose, which is freedom worthy of the name. I bullied all my editors, and behaved with supreme insolence to everyone who is now in authority over me, for I had reached the high top-gallant of my joy, and I belonged to that lucky fraternity of whom old Owen Feltham has written that "their paths are washt with butter and the rosebud crowns them." Such and so prosperous was the condition of my fortunes between the hours of six and eight on Thursday last, while I was employed in the noble occupation of building castles in the air—I built a whole town of them. True, the inevitable hour of disenchantment chimed with an ominous dirge, and when my landlady informed me that Mr. Chalk, my milkman (to whom I owe eighteenpence—and am well able to owe it), was waiting down stairs and had become importunate, I sighed to think that I resembled Caligula, who raised a mighty army, and then led it to gather cockle-shells—but what of that? I had had two hours of intense enjoyment, and

that is more than can be said by every muddy-mettled rascal who lords it in the Park or swaggers through Lombard Street, but who, for all his wealth, knows no more about the art and mystery of building castles in the air than a cow knows of playing the flute. Youth, the season made for joy, is not less certainly the age most favorable for castle-building. Who that ever was a boy or girl does not hark back with fond delight, not unmixed with a tender touch of melancholy, to the days when he or she mapped out a future of unclouded joy, and filled it with palaces of pleasure. To hear children talk of what they will do "when they are big"—that golden goal never to be reached soon enough, and then to think of what it will all end in, vanity and vexation of spirit, are matters that may well awaken in the mature observer a mournful reflection; for

> "O, ye tiny elves who sport
> Like linnets in a bush,
> You little know what grief you court
> When manhood is your wish."

All too true; and yet the very longing for that time, the very effort of the youthful imagination to invest it with ideal charms, the very attempt to paint it in the prismatic hues of fancy, are in themselves joys as genuine as any that the world can supply. Last Sunday morning a friend of mine, an artist of eminence, gave his eldest daughter a gold watch—a birthday gift on the completion of her fourteenth year. "How I wish that I was fourteen instead of six and a half, and then I should have a present!" exclamed her little sister. "Ah! my child," rejoined the father, "how I wish that I was fourteen and then I should have a

future." "*Tout le monde a son Carcasonne.*" Every one pictures to himself some condition of being more blissful and congenial than that which fortune has assigned to him. Handel fancied himself born to command a troop of horse, and Liston, whom nobody could look at without laughing in his face, lived and died in the belief that tragedy was his fort. Even M. Gambetta, who carries his affection for Republican institutions to such a pitch that he will go up in a balloon to serve their interests, sighs for the appearance of "that flower of elegance and good-breeding" which is to make the French Republic what the Athenian once was. May his head never ache till he gets it. Speaking of the romantic exaggerations of poesy, Sir Philip Sidney says that "Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as diverse poets have done: neither with so pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely. Her world is brazen; the poets deliver a golden." This holds good not alone of poets but also of lovers. For painting the meadows with delight, and filling the firmament with picturesque castles, I will back you hair-brained sweethearts against all creation.

THE MISERIES OF MUSIC.

"I AM never merry when I hear sweet music," says Shakespeare. No more am I, my divine William. I am downright miserable. Indeed, the more I think of it, the more firmly am I convinced that music is at the

bottom of fully one-half the miseries of human life. Who can be comfortable, who can hope to enjoy one hour of mental serenity, whose peace is everlastingly being invaded by the blowing of horns, the beating of drums, the droning of bag-pipes, the scraping of fiddles, the grinding of organs, and the various vocal noises that pass under the name of "singing?" Who, indeed? The row that goes on in the streets of London from foggy morn to "gassy" eve, owing to the uproar created on all hands by the blatant blackguards who are perpetually performing upon one instrument of torture or another, is enough to drive a man out of his senses. It shatters his nerves, disquiets his brain, spoils his temper, ruins his digestion, and plays the mischief with his liver. And the agony of it is that you never know what you have done with it. The evil is Hydra-headed, and is perpetually assuming new forms of horror and dismay. Barrel organs and brass bands were bad enough, in all conscience, but superadded to these we have now many contrivances still more exasperating. The most recent invention is an infernal machine upon wheels—a sort of mitrailleuse pianoforte, which being set in motion by the felonious arm of some unwashed scoundrel from beyond the Alps—would they were on the top of him!—discharges volley upon volley of the most maddening sounds into your ears, destroying all conversation, distracting all thought, forbidding all study, turning the blessed sense of hearing into a curse, and making you envy the deaf. There is no nation on earth besides ourselves who would endure such a persecution for four-and-twenty hours. They would turn as one man upon their torturers, and fling them and their hideous instruments into the sea. A half-naked Highlander prowling

under your windows, and playing upon that detestable thing called the bag-pipe, is a spectacle sufficiently humiliating to our civilization ; but the stalwart savage is tall, massive, and sinewy, a good-looking, well-proportioned fellow, lazy vagabond though he be, and after all he is our countryman. But what is to be said for those ugly, undersized Italian or Swiss miscreants in steeple hats, ragged cloaks, and filthy buskins, who under the pretence of dancing, caper about like galvanized jackasses, braying the while at the top of their villainous voices, and squeezing out of huge bags of air, which they carry beneath their right arms, noises compared to which the filing of saws is heavenly melody. Talk of the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe forsooth! Why it is the song of St. Cecilia in comparison. I declare that I would rather listen to the famous porcine piano invented by Louis XIII., and composed of living pigs of all ages and sizes, into whose bodies needles were driven successively so that the gruntings of the victims were modulated to a perfect gamut. Yes, I would rather —a thousand times rather—listen to such music as *that*, than to the howlings and dronings of these make-believe shepherds and cow-herds. Avaunt, you discordant scoundrels! Out of sight, you soapless, hirsute vagrants! Away with you!

> Cedite Tibicines Itali vos cedite Galli!
> Dico iterum vobis cedite Tibicines!
> Cedite Tibicines, vobis ter dico quaterque
> Iterum vobis dico Cedite Tibicines!"

But no. They won't stir. Not an inch will they budge; they know better, the scamps. You flee from London to the sea-side in the hope of avoiding their

persecution. Vain hope! Out of the frying-pan into the fire! Go where you may, they pursue you remorselessly. You take a quiet lodging, far from the terraces and squares, only to find that the "musicians"—bless the mark—come in front of your house in successive batches, relieving one another with the regularity of sentries. You venture upon the pier, but there they are before you. The town is swarming with hordes of inharmonious minstrels vying to make day and night alike—hideous. Turn where you may they shock your gaze and horrify your ears. There are three or four distinct *troupes* of sham niggers with their bones, fiddles, and tambourines, their slang songs and idiotic jokes. The atmosphere resounds with their ribald jests and gimcrack ballads, and their outlandish dress is in perfect keeping with their barbarous clangor. Perhaps you are discoursing with your sweetheart on the blessed tranquillity of a country life, when "Fireworks on the brain!" bursts upon you with a mocking, agonizing distinctness; or it may be that you are in a tender, sentimental vein, and on the very verge of a proposal, when "First she would and then she wouldn't" comes ringing through the air with a derisive cadence that makes you regard your Beloved as a heartless little flirt, unworthy of your choice. Presently the squeak of "Mr. Punch" turns your teeth on edge; and hardly have you recovered from the unpleasant sensation when you find yourself confronted by a piper, a fiddler, an organ-grinder, or, worse still, an artist who performs upon the spout of a coffee-pot. Every man Jack of them is playing the same air—the tune the old cow died of; and many besides that aged animal have perished of that tune. By-and-bye you are doomed to hearken to the squalling of a ballad-singer far dearer to

Bacchus than to Apollo. Oh! my good woman, *do*, for pity's sake, hold your tongue.

> "Swans sing before they die; 'twere no bad thing
> Did certain persons die before they sing."

So said Samuel Taylor Coleridge; but what care you for Samuel Taylor Coleridge? Not a potato. As well might one whistle jigs to a mile-stone in the hope of setting it a-dancing, as quote poetry to you in the hope of moving you to mercy. Your calling is to make people miserable, and all too well do you fulfil your mission. Then, again, there are oratorios, than which nothing under the sun can be much more absurd. "What," asks Sydney Smith, "can be more ridiculous than to see four or five hundred fiddlers scraping away for their dear lives all about Moses and the children of Israel in the Red Sea?" The most enthusiastic votaries of Paganini's art have never yet been able to give a satisfactory answer to that question. So much for the miseries of music in public. In private they are neither less numerous nor less poignant. When Music, heavenly maid, was young, who could have supposed that she would turn out to be such a nuisance in her old age? You go to a friend's house hoping to spend a pleasant evening; but it is out of the question. No sooner have you warmed to your cosy little chat than up stands some unfortunate man or still more unfortunate woman, who fancies that he or she can sing, and who, under that hallucination, makes for the piano and proceeds to utter a horrid clamor fatal alike to sensible discourse and social enjoyment. Farewell now to friendly converse, a long farewell to all the joys of convivial intercourse. "If music be the food of love, play on!"

Just so ; but it isn't. The food of love, indeed ! It is the food of hatred. Consider what happens upon the field of battle. Do you really suppose that thousands upon thousands of men who owe one another no grudge, who, so far from having any personal quarrel, have never before been face to face, and do not so much as know one another's names, would fly at one another's throats and shed one another's blood like water if they were not driven to distraction, brutalized, infuriated, and bereft of humanity by music? Yes, I say by music. It is the spirit-stirring drum, and the ear-piercing fife, which makes them raving maniacs, insensible to pity, insensible to love.

> "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,
> To soften rocks or bend a knotted oak."

So sings Congreve ; but don't believe a word of it. If music hath charms to soothe the savage breast, how comes it that so many ferocious crimes are every day committed in the very lanes and alleys where the organ-grinders are grinding, the German bands braying, and the ballad-singers bleating all day long? If music hath charms to soften rocks and bend the knotted oaks, how comes it that the rocks in Scotland, where the bag-pipes are eternally droning, are still as hard as adamant, and that the oaks in Greenwich Park, where people are continually singing, are still as knotty as Mr. Browning's poetry? Answer me *that* if you please, or evermore hold your peace. The practice of having music played during dinner is highly objectionable, not to say dangerous. If a man has a good ear, he will measure his mastication by the music, and the consequences may be very serious. If the band plays the "Dead March" in

Saul, he may be an hour over an omelette ; if they play "Pop goes the Weasel" or an Irish jig, his teeth will keep time with the rollicking air, and he will run the risk of being choked. Thus you see that, go where we may or do what we will, Music is still an endless source of worry and annoyance. It is all very fine for you to throw in my teeth what Shakespeare has written about the iniquity of the man who hath no music in himself, and the inferential excellence of the man who hath. It is all stuff and nonsense. Some of the very best men I have ever known could not hum "The Bay of Biscay," or anything else, though their lives depended upon it; and some of the most disagreeable, good-for-nothing people I have ever met were caterwauling morning, noon, and nights. Why, bless my heart, I have the happy privilege of knowing a man who, though he has not a note of music in his voice, and could not for the dear life of him tell "Ye Banks and Braes" from "Yankee Doodle," is everlastingly endeavoring to sing. I had as soon listen to the cats on the tiles, or the owls in the ivy-bushes. Yet, you may take my word of honor for it, that man, all unmusical though he be, is a paragon of men. He is as near perfection as any human being can ever hope to approach. Let the poets say what they may, Music has a demoralizing, infuriating effect, and the less you have to do with it the better for your neighbors and yourself. Did it ever happen to you to live next door to a man who was learning to play the flute? If so, was there ever a day in the year that you did not thirst for his blood? Of course there was not. Sicilian tyrants never invented any such torture as to dwell within earshot of a fellow who is learning the flute. For my own part I can conscientiously affirm

that the only enjoyment I ever got out of music of any sort was the indirect fun I derived from reading that splendid little story about the Primitive Methodists, somewhere in Cornwall, who, not having among them any one who had the requisite skill to play the organ, purchased a mechanical self-playing instrument. At a stated period in the service on the first Sunday after the arrival of the machine from London, a venerable Methodist wound it up very solemnly. Imagine the horror and consternation of the congregation on finding their ears saluted, not with the "Old Hundredth," but with "The Pretty Little Ratcatcher's Daughter." In vain did they subject the organ to all manner of practical remonstrances, in vain did they attempt to induce it either to change its tune or hold its peace. Finding it irreclaimable, a couple of able-bodied Methodists lifted it on their shoulders and carried it out of the chapel. But matters were not to be thus easily arranged. True, the organ was turned out and placed ignominiously in a garden hard by; but, having been once wound up, the scampish instrument was bound to go through the whole category of its airs, and for fully half an hour the congregation was doomed to hear it shouting out of doors that Champagne Charlie was its name. The explanation of this marvellous proceeding was that the organ-builders had made the mistake of sending to the Primitives in Cornwall an organ which was intended for the Hall-by-the-Sea at Margate. The Methodists, who are most worthy and virtuous people, were scandalized beyond expression; but their sad mishap only serves to illustrate the truth of my proposition, that music is at the bottom of half the miseries of human life.

THE WITCHERY OF MANNER.

MANNER is beyond question one of the most marvellous mysteries of our nature. I now allude more particularly to personal manner, and the favor, influence, and pre-eminence which some people enjoy among their fellows by reason of that magic endowment. Who can explain the witchery of a gracious, genial manner? Whence does it come? In what does it consist? What is the source and secret of its enchanting spell? There are men and women who attract our confidence at a glance. You have not been in their company more than a minute or two, nor have you and they exchanged more than half-a-dozen words, before you feel at home with them. They have a gentle, unaffected courtesy, a frankness of look, a suavity of tone, as natural to them as is its lustre to a jewel or its fragrance to a flower. There is a nameless something—a "*je ne sais quoi*," as the French phrase it, in their air and demeanor, in the expression of their eyes, in the radiance of their brows, in the smile that plays sweetly around their lips, in the very sound of their voices, which bespeaks sympathy with you and wins its way irresistibly to your heart. They have about them that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. From the snow-fields and icebergs of the Arctic Circle to the golden orange gardens and silver olive groves of southern Italy, is not a change pleasanter or more complete than from the cold, inhospitable company and the barren arid talk of commonplace persons to the delight-

ful conversation and benignant companionship of such people as these. It is manner that makes all the difference. "Manner maketh man," says the old proverb, nor man alone, but woman also. This it is that ineffably enhances the charms of the loveliest face and causes one to forget the plainness of the least comely. "Where is it?" asks Mr. Thackeray. "What is it—the secret which makes one little hand the dearest of all?" Is it not manner? After depicting with masterly skill the personal perfections of Haidee, her fine features and matchless form, Byron illustrates her crowning glory by one of the simplest, but, at the same time, one of the happiest similes in the whole range of English poetry:—

"and her manner
Shed hovering graces round her, like a banner."

To realize the poetic value of this image, picture to yourself what wonderful beauty there is in a banner of any kind, whether in the standard of battle or in the trembling pennant of a ship cleaving her foamy track through the waters, or in the flag waving in the wind from the battlements of some grand old castle. What a grace for example does the flag floating from Windsor Castle give to that superb structure, and to the woodland landscape that surrounds it! What an air of refinement that radiant ensign imparts to the whole scene! Just such is the effect of manner. I have present to my memory, as I write, a woman now in Paradise, whom to have known was indeed to have loved. She was not beautiful, but she was delightful. Go where she might she brought sunshine with her. Her friends were ever the happier for her coming, ever the sadder for her going. She had a tear for every sorrow, a smile for

every joy. Her sympathetic manner soothed and brightened every one. Never have I seen a woman who verified so accurately Young's melodious verses :—

"What's female beauty but an air divine,
Through which the soul's more gentle graces shine;
They, like the sun, irradiate all between,
The body charms because the mind is seen."

There is the whole pith of the question. Nothing so tries my patience as to be told by the apologists of a brutal man that I must excuse his brutality on account of his manner. "Oh! never mind; it is only his manner." This is begging the whole question. In his odious manner dwells his whole offence. It is of his manner that I complain. Let him mend it. Alas! as well might you ask him to fly to the moon. Whether in man or woman, manner is the out-come of the inner nature. So it was regarded by the ancient Romans, who used the same word—"*mores*"—to signify both manners and morals. It is a vulgar error, and worthy of the vulgar, since nothing can be more absurd, to regard rude, disagreeable people, as good-hearted. What fudge! Humanity even in its best types is but frail, and I can entirely understand that a man of sound and sweet nature may occasionally indulge in outbursts of passion. The warmth of his heart finds its way into his temper; but the remorse of such a man is generally in excess of his offence, and the true manliness of his disposition ever prompts him to make all the atonement in his power for the annoyance he may have caused to his neighbors. But to tell me that that man can have a good heart who is systematically perverse, cross-grained, morose, impolite, and regardless of the feelings of

others, is to insult my understanding. You might as well tell me that that is a good apple-tree which invariably produces sour apples. Those sullen scoundrels, whose general deportment, bleak, dismal, and dreary, reminds one of that lake in the Helvetian Alps, to which tradition tells us the spirit of Pontius Pilate has been banished, can be civil enough when they please ; but that is only when their own private interests are to be served by civility. From such men I always part with joy, ever longing to address them in the language of Jacques to Orlando, "God be with you ! Let us meet as little as we can." The charms of manner are hopelessly beyond the reach of such men ; and for this obvious reason, that they want the inner and spiritual grace of which manner is but the outward and visible sign.

Politeness has been well described as benevolence in trifles ; and if this definition is true, it is out of the question that they can be truly polite in whose nature there is no principle of benevolence. A winning manner is wholly unattainable by those who, always studious of their own profit and convenience, have no thought for the happiness of others. "We talk of human life as a journey," says a brilliant writer, "but how variously is that journey performed ! There are some who come forth, girt and shod and mantled, to walk on velvet lawns and smooth terraces, where every gale is arrested and every beam is tempered. There are others who walk on the Alpine paths of life against driving misery, through stormy sorrows, over sharp afflictions with bare feet and naked breast, jaded, mangled, and chilled." Marvellous, indeed, are the contrasts of destiny ; but if travellers wending their way along the same road would but practice the small sweet courtesies of life and culti-

vate the charms that dwell in manner, how much smoother and pleasanter the journey would be! Instead of pursuing such a course, it too often happens that the pilgrims view one another with mutual distrust and aversion, regarding their own comfort alone, and displaying at periods of common danger a sullen inflexibility which circumstances cannot influence, pity soften, reason subdue. The little-minded and pretentious are blind to the virtues of their neighbors, and thus fail to find either pleasure or advantage in their society. Of this rest confidently assured, that modesty is the companion of worth, and that a generous appreciation of others is the head-spring of a noble and endearing manner. I never yet knew a man of real power who was not diffident of his own ability, and fondly appreciative of ability in his friends. The good and gifted make to themselves lofty ideals, and finding them difficult of attainment, are modest. Let not their modesty be set down to want either of merit or spirit.

> "Ah! they speak best who best express
> Their inability to speak;
> And none are strong but who confess
> With happy skill that they are weak."

"Manner," says Lord Chesterfield, "must adorn knowledge and smooth its way through the world."

But care must be taken to distinguish between the true thing and its base counterfeit. A gracious, genial manner has nothing in common with that detestable form of insincere courtesy known as "blarney." It were much better that a man should be as rough as a polar bear than that his politeness should develop into the rank luxuriance of "blarney," which is but another name for humbug. True nobility of demeanor comes

from "high thoughts throned on a heart of courtesy." Any politeness not so originating is worthless. Being, as it is, the effluence of inner worth, manner is independent of courtly etiquette and ceremonious observance, and wholly irrespective of conventional distinctions. It abounds wherever nature's gentlemen are found, whether in court, camp, or cottage. You may read it in the cheery smile and frank bearing of the sailor; in the cordial "*bonhomie*" of the soldier, gentle as brave; in the bluff, genial pleasantry of the ploughman whistling at the plough; in the hearty untutored courtesy of the honest mechanic. It is equally the heritage of prince and peasant, and, emanating in each from common goodness of heart, constitutes a bond of fellowship between them, which no difference of rank or fortune can destroy. So much for manner in its purely personal aspects; but manner has an artistic as well as a social significance. It gives character to a man's work, "*Le style c'est de l'homme*," says Buffon, with perfect truth. It is not so much what a man does, as the way he does it; not so much what he says as the way he says it, that creates effect and produces pleasure. "*Nil dictum quod non prius dictum methodus solus artificem ostendit.*" "Nothing can be said that has not been said already, the style of saying it alone bespeaks the artist," was the astute remark of Petronius Arbiter. The same song or story which from some lips comes as heavily as lead, drops from others like a shower of pearls. One actor will put you to sleep with a recitation, which, spoken by another, would set your blood dancing. The finest sermon in the world, delivered by a preacher who has no knowledge of manner, falls on the most devout congregation even as the sound of the trumpet on a dead charger's ear.

Let the same discourse be spoken by a true orator, and mark how thrilling will be the effect! See with what breathless delight the hearers will watch

> "The expressive glance whose subtle comment draws,
> Entranced attention and a mute applause;
> Gesture that marks, with force and feeling fraught,
> A sense in silence and a will in thought."

Such is the witchery of manner, and happy indeed are they who possess the priceless gift.

WHISTLING.

NEVERTHELESS, I am decidedly of opinion. That will do. Well begun is half done. We are now under weigh. We have made a good commencement; having said, "nevertheless, I am decidedly of opinion," I have rushed *in medias res*, and, to vary the metaphor, am sailing in the eye of the wind, as mariners are wont strangely to phrase it. Had my first word been "notwithstanding," I should have come to a dead-lock, and should not have been able, for the life of me, to budge an inch farther; but having set out with "nevertheless," all is well. In the composition of these essays there are only three things which I find a difficulty in managing. One is the beginning, another is the middle, a third is the end. But for these three little matters, I should get on like a house on fire, as a body may say, and these treatises of mine would be productive of as little trouble to me as they are of pleasure to you. It is

in writing as in all other affairs. There are many obstacles to be surmounted, but the most arduous of all is the commencement. Blessed be Minerva and the Muses nine, I have hit upon a happy phrase to begin with, and tacking back to it, I read it now, "to mine great refreshment," as poor Robinson Crusoe said of his glass of rum. Cavillers may perhaps object that when a man opens either a book or an essay with "nevertheless," it is not altogether as clear as the sun in midsummer what reservation he means to cover by the word, there being no foregoing statement; but people who would take exception so captiously are past arguing with. "D—— you, sir, where is your religion?" says an irascible old gentleman in one of Cumberland's comedies to his scapegrace of a son. I dislike strong language; but under the bitter provocation of the present moment I can't help exclaiming, "Bless your dear heart, where is your imagination? if you cannot picture to yourself what I was thinking of before I said 'nevertheless.'" I hate to be bullied. If you will only keep your temper, I will admit you into my confidence. My thoughts were wending their way thus:—I am passionately fond of music, nevertheless I am decidedly of opinion that whistling is a highly objectionable practice. And so, indeed, it is. Have you ever observed with what a mania for whistling the street-boys of London are possessed? Go where they may, do what they will; in sunshine as in shadow; in business as in pleasure; morning, noon, and night, they are everlastingly whistling. An old proverb bids us beware of a crowing hen and a whistling woman, but the caution, in so far as it relates to woman—lovely woman!—is wholly uncalled for. I don't see why a woman should not whistle, and crow, too, for the mat-

ter of that, if so disposed. Man, to be sure, forbids her to whistle, just as he forbids her to smoke, to wear a glass in one eye, to play the drum, and to do many other things that he takes delight in himself; but that only shows what a brutal tyrant he is. Why does he not command the boys to desist from whistling? Because he is a coward. He is afraid of the boys, and knows they will defy him; but if a woman presumes to whistle, he instantly reproves her or compels her to desist—poor thing! Is that fair? Certainly not. It is intolerable. If women were permitted to whistle, they would do so with good taste and good feeling, as they do everything; they would whistle melodiously, and only within doors and suitable seasons; whereas these plaguy boys, who infest the streets of London, whistle without regard to rhyme or reason, in-doors and out-of-doors, in spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, most discordantly, and without the slightest respect for tune. Their favorite air is the air the old cow died of, and this they perform with merciless pertinacity, little caring what havoc they may spread, either among cows or men. It is enough to drive one mad to hear these urchins whistling all over London till they are well-nigh black in the face. It is, upon my honor. If they whistle as they go, "for want of thought," it is a thousand pities they have not something to think of. Thought might "destroy their paradise," but what of that? It would at least save from torture men who are old enough to be their fathers, and some of whom by the way *are* their fathers.

Italian organ-grinders are bad enough, Swiss pipers are still worse, but I am by no means sure that our own whistling boys are not the worst of all. The grinders

and pipers are horrid nuisances, to be sure; but, after all is said and done, they are periodic not perpetual; they may be "run in" by the police if they won't move on; and villanous as are their noises, they bear some faint resemblance to airs; but the boys are eternally whistling; they defy not the police alone, but horse, foot, and artillery, and their noises, generally speaking, bear about as much resemblance to a tune as does the filing of a saw to one of Beethoven's Sonatas. What pleasure they can possibly find in the utterance of such sounds, is a mystery past human comprehension. I was riding one day in a carriage and pair from Queen's Elm, Brompton, to Piccadilly Circus. Presently there came into the omnibus a very small boy, who had probably seen some thirteen summers, and peradventure as many winters—a diminutive child for his age, and sitting right in front of me and looking me steadily between the eyes, he began to whistle something having a sickly resemblance to "Tommy, make room for your uncle!" I tried to enter into conversation with the boy, in the hope that being lured into talk, he would find it impossible to talk as well. But no, he was not to be caught. I then told him the story about Quin, the actor, whose habit it was to play Othello regularly once a year for a charitable object, until at last he lost his front teeth, whereupon he observed, "I *played* Othello as long as I was able, but I'll be hanged if I will *whistle* it for any one." "From this remark you may infer, my boy, what an ignoble noise whistling must be, and how unworthy of refined lips." He simply winked at me, and kept on at his ear-piercing performance as lustily as ever. When we had arrived at Constitution Hill, I pulled out a brand-new sixpence, and addressed him in

these words: "Robert Walpole has averred that every man has his price. I suppose that as much may be said of every boy. Here's sixpence for you, *young man*, on condition that you won't whistle any more as long as I am in the omnibus." "All right, Guv'nor," was the urchin's ready reply, and thenceforward he was as mute as an oyster—not the whistling oyster, fortunately, for that "native" would have been a "settler" for me,—but as any ordinary, well-behaved mollusc. For the rest of my little journey I enjoyed perfect tranquillity. But what a stigma it is upon our civilization, in this much-vaunted nineteenth century, to have to say that that blessing would have been denied to me if I had not gratified a child's vanity by calling him a young man, and his avarice by giving him sixpence! But peace is above all price, and I willingly admit that I did not pay him too dearly for his whistle, or, rather, for the silencing of it.

Boys are not the only offenders. There are men—to their confusion be it spoken!—who, being old enough to know better, yet whistle, and that incessantly, with the twofold result of bringing ridicule upon themselves and discomfort on others. Addison tells us of a competition at a village festival, where "the prize was a guinea, to be conferred upon the ablest whistler, who could whistle clearest, and go through his tune without laughing." A match of that sort is all well enough, provided always the competitors have ears as well as lips for music. Even in London, one happens once in a blue-moon upon a professional whistler whose performance is exceedingly musical. Such a fellow did I hear whistle to a harp accompaniment, in an alley near the Bank of England, a few days before Christmas, and

admirably he did it. No thrush or robin was ever half so melodious ; but whistlers of that kind are almost as rare as fish beneath the plough-share. Indeed, you may take it for granted that whatever music there is in the streets worth listening to is to be found in the City, the liberal habits of City men attracting thither minstrels with sôme little pretence to musical skill. I have heard a fellow whistle upon the spout of a tea-pot in Basinghall Street, and though one may have no particular desire to drink mocha out of the instrument on which he performs, one cannot help recognizing the ability he displays. But what no living creature, with any pretension to be regarded as a human being, can hear without indignant scorn, is the perpetual noise of whistling kept up in the streets, mostly by boys, but not unfrequently by men also, alike so ill-qualified for the task that they could not turn a tune though their lives depended on it.

But grievous as are the social abuses of whistling, it is not without its poetic uses. The boatswain's whistle piping all hands to quarters has done good service before now in nautical ballads, as Dibdin and Bennet can attest. Even the shrill whistle of the locomotive, as it darts at night with lightning speed over meadow and mountain, moss and moor, is not without a certain mystical and weird charm. Still more romantic is the sound of the wind whistling through a pine-forest or over the darkling sea. When ploughing was still a picturesque operation, ere yet horses and oxen had been supplanted by steam-pots in the task of traction, it was an understood thing that the man who drove the team should whistle at the plough's tail. Thus Milton talks of the hour

"When the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrowed land."

And Gray would have him indulge in his favorite pastime when no longer on duty:—

"The ploughman leaves the task of day,
And trudging homeward, whistles on the way."

In France to whistle after a person means a downright insult, but in Scotland the same practice would seem to have a complimentary significance, as we may infer from the fact that there is mention in Caledonian song of a young woman who, so far as from taking offence, said to her lover one fine day, "Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad." Tradition says that the gentleman did as he was told; that the lady was no worse than her word; that they were married, and had a very large family. Othello, on the other hand, treated the matter in a very different light, and threatened to dispose of Desdemona in a whistling fashion suggestive of sensations the reverse of comfortable:—

"If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart's strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind
To prey at fortune."

Alas! poor Desdemona. But there! an obstinate man will have his way, and it's of no use to talk to him. But *revenons à nos moutons*—the mutton-headed boys who whistle in our streets. They are a worry and a distraction—a bore and a bother. A whistling bullfinch may be tolerated, but a whistling boy-finch is a nuisance. The rhetorical, poetical, nautical, agricultural, and amatory uses of whistling are commendable

enough, and may not be interfered with; but street-whistling is an abomination, and cannot be any longer permitted. That's the long and the short of the matter.

"SAUCY DOUBTS AND FEARS."

"A SOLDIER and afeared." Such was the taunt addressed by Lady Macbeth to her trembling lord, and never did wife aim at her husband's heart a shaft of more poignant sarcasm. Yet the contrast of ideas, however ignoble in fancy, is by no means without warrant in fact. There are well-attested cases, not a few, of soldiers having turned and fled when first they went into action, who, after their ears had grown "more Irish and less nice" to the report of firearms, walked without blenching to the cannon's mouth and performed prodigies of valor. "Who's afraid?" is a familiar interrogatory, to which the honest answer is "everybody." "Fear," says Dr. Johnson, "is one of the passions of human nature of which it is impossible to divest it." You remember that the Emperor Charles V., when he read upon the tombstone of a Spanish nobleman, "Here lies one who never knew fear," replied, with sly humor, "Then he never snuffed a candle with his fingers." The fact is that we are all "bound in to saucy doubts and fears" of some sort or another, and the very man who is as brave as a lion in great emergencies may be as timid as a dove on occasions so trivial as to provoke the laughter of spectators. This is doubtless what is meant by the homely old proverb, "There is a skeleton

in every cupboard." I know a man six-foot-two in his stockings, who won the Victoria Cross for exceeding great valor on the field of battle, but who would run into a rat hole from a wife who hardly reaches his elbow. Another man know I who has done heroic things in his time, such as plunging into angry seas and houses on fire for the rescue of a fellow creature, and who, I do verily believe, would face the Devil in brass for any good cause, yet has he such a horror of a dog that he would not stay in the same room with one for any earthly consideration. Men who would scorn to turn their backs upon a foe of flesh and blood have grown pale before now at the thought of a ghost. We have the authority of Augustus Cæsar for the statement that Suetonius was afraid to be in the dark without a companion. Every one's experience will supply him, either from his own knowledge of himself, or from his observation of his neighbors, with instances of timidity equally irrational, though in both quarters there may be no lack of true courage in the presence of real danger.

Nor is it alone the possibility of our own little candle of a life being swiftly blown out that creates uneasiness even in the hearts of the valiant. We fear more for others than for ourselves, and are often at a loss to account for our apprehensions. Like meteoric stones falling, we know not wherefore, out of the azure sky, are the thoughts of coming sorrow with which the heart is suddenly darkened and oppressed, at the moment, it may be, when the horizon of our destiny looks cloudless. We pause for the footfall of fate on our ear "*Nescio quid mihi animus præsagit mali.*" What lover is there, or husband or wife, or father or mother, or

friend, endowed with any gift of sensibility, who, gazing on the object of fond affection, has not at times been haunted by the thought, the dark, disheartening thought, that the Beloved may die. In our own case, "the readiness is all," as Hamlet says, but it is no such easy matter to give up those who are dearer to us than life. There is no anguish more bitter than that which we experience in the very contemplation of such a contingency. But apart and distinct from these tragical imaginings of supreme woe are the gloomy forebodings of minor disasters, wherewith our fancies are occasionally affrighted. You cannot, for the life of you, understand the depression with which your spirit is at times overcast. You may ascribe it to the weather, or to some familiar physiological cause; but the true origin of it belongs to our immortal being, and like it baffles comprehension. A sudden sense of incapacity seizes the most gifted minds. The pencil of the finest painter sheds no color; the pen of the noblest writer refuses its office; the orator is dumb; the musician knows no touch of melody; the greatest of actors surrenders his inspiration to stage-fright. "Our sensibilities are so acute, the fear of being silent makes us mute." And it is worthy of remark, and may be stated for the refutation of the vulgar and supercilious, that the bravest and best natures are precisely those which suffer most acutely from the visitation of these "saucy doubts and fears." A dullard is easily pleased, so cold is his imagination, and so tenantless is his mind; but the truly gifted and highly cultured make to themselves lofty ideals of merit, and however they may delight others, rarely succeed in satisfying themselves. They are modest, not because they may not fulfil your concep-

tions of excellence, but because they cannot realize their own. It continually happens that men of this poetic temperament mistrust themselves, and are haunted with a certain indefinable presentment of coming calamity. So it was in varying senses and degrees with Pope, Gray, Cowper, Byron, Moore, and Mangan.

D'ailleurs there is much comfort in the thought that our doubts are frequently but shadows, and that Heaven disappoints our fears oftener, far oftener, than our hopes.

Mental superiority has its penalties as well as its privileges, and among those penalties is unquestionably to be classed a degree of sensitiveness to which meaner natures are strangers. The higher the organization, the keener will be the susceptibility to disheartening influences. It is with men as with the animals whom we are pleased to designate as the "lower." A race-horse, a true "blood," is the most nervous of living creatures. On the slightest excitement he quivers in every nerve and fibre, while a dull Flemish cart-horse plods sluggishly along, uncaring for an earthquake. I have known many men of many ranks and races, but I never knew a man worth his salt who was not in some sense "nervous." The most heroic are oftentimes the most nervous. A man of brilliant imagination will doubtless invest an alarming occasion with terrors more than real, but it by no means follows that he will be less ready than your muddy-mettled rascal to confront true danger; on the contrary, that very rapidity and brightness of intellect which exaggerated the perils will probably supply resources of deliverance. Bravery consists not in being insensible to fear, but rather in retaining such self-possession in danger as will enable

you to meet the emergency, and present a valiant front to adverse fortune. But the fancy is easily distressed, and very wonderful is it to think what trivial matters will suffice to alarm it. To some people, celerity of motion is very disquieting; and for my own poor part, I am fain to confess that I do not feel particularly comfortable when travelling by express at the rate of a mile a minute. A much lower rate of speed alarmed a timid passenger by the York Mail in the good old coaching days. "Oh! Mr. Coachman," she inquired, "is there any fear?" "Plenty of fear, ma'am," replied the Jehu, "but no danger;" which was reassuring. There are people of a highly imaginative type who, whether at home or abroad, and on whatsoever pursuit intent, would seem to be in constant communication with some other world than this :—

> "They hear a voice you cannot hear,
> Which says they must not stay;
> They see a hand you cannot see,
> Which beckons them away."

Certain hours of the day are more promotive than others of uneasy sensations. In the dead waste and middle of the night ghosts are wont to walk. At early dawn, the fancy sometimes plays strange freaks, and in the "*dubia lux*" of twilight the dim outlines of things assume fantastic shapes. Night, too, has her fears, and the least imaginative of us, musing alone in a dark gallery of a country-house, may have tremulous thoughts, not unlike those that disquieted the mind of Don Juan under like circumstances :—

> "As Juan mused on mutability,
> Or on his mistress—terms synonymous—
> No sound except the echo of his sigh
> Or step ran sadly through that antique house;

When suddenly he heard, or thought so, nigh,
A supernatural agent, or a mouse,
Whose little nibbling rustle will embarrass
Most people as it plays along the arras."

For some minds fear has a strange fascination, and scenes such as Llanberis or the pass of Glencoe grow singularly attractive at nightfall, more particularly when the thunder rolls, and the lightning flashes, and the rain comes down in torrents. I remember your having said, in one of your essays last summer, dear reader, that you regarded a thunderstorm, a raging sea, and a lady in a passion with her husband, as the three most sublime spectacles in nature, and I am altogether of your opinion. Probably in each case the sublimity is enhanced by the sensation of terror which each inspires.

AN ISLAND OF TRANQUIL DELIGHTS.

No. I.

I CAUGHT the London, Brighton, and South-Coast train in the very nick of time, and after a swift, smooth ride of about two hours, turned up at Havant, whence there is a branch line to Hayling Island. Arrived at Havant, you find yourself seized with an irresistible inclination to indulge in the verbal turpitude of a pun. You turn to your fellow-traveller, whoever he may be, and ask him whether he has been at Havant before. He answers, in the innocence of his soul, "I *havn't*," whereupon you express your indignation that he should

indulge in so petty a joke. "I am surprised, sir, that you should make a jest of a civil question." "I protest, sir, I *havn't*," he replies. "There you go again!" you say, in a towering passion. And so the angry recrimination continues, till the whistle from the engine of the local train warns you to give up such foolery. "'*Avant* avaunt!" you exclaim to yourself, as you plunge into your carriage, and, "lighting up," surrender yourself to the gentle reveries induced by nicotine. The little railway from Havant to the island is the funniest little railway in the world. It is a single line,—I do not mean thereby that it is unmarried, but simply that it has no double set of iron trams. It is a serpentine sort of line, and, winding its way circuitously over a long wooden bridge and through a marshy district, indulges in such a series of tortuous escapades that I have called it the "Colly-Wobble" Railway, by which name I desire it to be known to posterity. The engine-driver is a stately, elderly gentleman, to whom one feels instinctively disposed to raise one's hat. The guard, a fair-haired man, with a straw-colored beard, is a clever, civil fellow, who has "all his work cut out for him," as the saying goes, seeing that he has to act not only as guard, but also as ticket-collector and porter. Nay, more, he has to officiate as station-master as well at Langston and North Hayling, the stations at both those places resembling sentry-boxes, wherein dwelleth no sentry nor any human being to look after the arrivals and departures of the train. All is done by the many-handed guard, who is an army of officials in himself. On reaching the terminus at Hayling, I was greeted with a huge smile from the portrait of Mr. Perry Davis, the Pain-killer, and I was informed of what I knew before I

left town, to wit, that Mr. Taylor, of Pimlico, is provided with wagons and horses for the removal of my furniture. Let the Sheriff of Middlesex take note of it. But strange to say, I was left hopelessly in the dark respecting the name of the newspaper which has the largest circulation in the world. Nay, more, though I have spent several days in the island since then, I have never once laid eyes upon an advertisement giving any such information, a fact to which I invite the particular attention of the brilliant, and, as I had fondly imagined, ubiquitous journal whose head-quarters are in Fleet Street. If the railway from Havant to Hayling Island is the funniest little railway in the world, the omnibus which conveys you from the station at South Hayling to the Royal Hotel is, beyond question, the funniest little conveyance of the sort to be found in any country from the Equator to either Pole. This I say in full remembrance of the New Forest omnibus, which, until I visited Hayling, I had imagined to be the strangest vehicle of the kind on earth. But the Hayling omnibus beats it hollow. It is as round as a pumpkin and as red as blood, and so low in the roof that a man of average stature sitting inside must bend his head in the most obsequious manner. I have ridden in all manner of vehicles, from a wheelbarrow, in which I was once rolled—oh, how luxuriously!—for half a mile along a country road by a being of boundless goodness and beauty ineffable, to a Lapland sledge drawn by dogs and pursued by wolves, and thence to a tea-colored brougham in the Park, but never shall I forget my ride in the little Hayling omnibus, stooping, as I was, all the way. Right glad was I to get out of it, for "*Frangi, non flecti,*" is the motto of my house.

Hayling is a charming place, its charm consisting in its peacefulness. It is the very home of peace—a veritable island of tranquil delights, the delights dwelling altogether in the tranquillity. I do not remember to have ever before set foot in so quiet a spot having any pretensions to civilization. There may be, and doubtless there are, other islands utterly uninhabited, and therefore still quieter, but for an inhabited and even populous island within humanity's reach, it is the serenest, most noiseless, most throbless region that fancy can conceive of or language depict. From Holborn to Hayling! What a transition! It is a change akin to that from the lion to the lamb, or from a roaring sea to a calm, sequestered lake, or from a London lodging-house to a hermit's cave, or from wedded life to chambers in the Albany. Hayling is a "tight" little island, not, I should imagine, in the slang sense of intoxication —for ale-houses are few and far between, and I found, to my bitter mortification, that at the "Royal" and only hotel they were out of bottled beer—but rather in the signification of tidiness and trimness. It is richly cultivated, not a rood of soil being left untilled, and it is studded with comfortable farm-houses and cosy little homesteads. There is no trace of poverty anywhere; everybody seems well off, and "take it easy" appears to be the rule of conduct with the islanders. How slowly they walk and talk, and what a blessed air of repose is around them one and all! Nobody seems to be in a hurry. Nobody seems to have any business on hand that needs the slightest anxiety or activity. Nobody puts himself out. Everybody takes it easy, and it does him good. Compare this with the uproar and turbulence of town,—the hurry-scurry of the Strand, the

toil and turmoil of Ludgate Hill, the tearing to and fro in the City, the clamorous confusion of Charing Cross, the roar of Temple Bar! Give me Hayling Island, where not a mouse is stirring, where the people seem to be moving about in a delicious dream, where every living creature is bound in a spell of repose, where the robins sing cheerily from every leafless branch, and where, save their voices, no other sound salutes your ear than that of the waves breaking in picturesque disarray upon the velvet sands. Yes! give me Hayling Island, and you may have High Holborn and welcome, if you list. It is a depraved taste and very wicked, I dare say, but the longer I live the fonder I get of the country. I can't help it, but, say what you will, I must prefer a flower to a paving-stone, a tree to a chimney-pot, the sea to a sewer.

The Island of Hayling is divided into two parishes, North Hayling and South Hayling; and as in the great continent across the Atlantic, so likewise upon the coast of Hampshire, the Northerners and Southerners are not without their mutual little jealousies. How the Island came to be called "Hayling" is a mystery which the learned in local etymology may possibly have fathomed, but which passes the comprehension of the illiterate like you and me, dear reader. Can it be that it is always "hailing" there? or that the people when they meet are "hailing" one another? or that they are "ailing?" or that they are "ale-ing?" or that hay and ling are both to be found in the place? I know not, I care not. All I know is that it is a right pleasant little island, and if you don't think so, you would do well not to go there. What care I? Both in the North and South the Haylingers are an honest, hospitable race all

the same, and a stranger (with money in his pocket) is sure of a hearty welcome. If an arrangement could be made with Nature for such a change in the currents of the ocean as would admit of the tide being always "in," Hayling Island would look brilliant and beautiful at all times; but truth compels the admission that, though the southern coast of the island, which is washed by the English Channel, is always lovely to look upon, the other shores are dismal and marshy enough at low water. But there! you cannot have it every way in this bothering world. Think yourself lucky that you have it any way, and be thankful. What is the use of grumbling? There are one or two things—no more—which detract somewhat from the comfort of a residence in this Island of Tranquil Delights. Of these, the first is the extreme difficulty of getting anything to eat; the second is the still more serious difficulty of getting anything to drink; the third is the greatest difficulty of all, that of finding a place where to lay your head. Were it not for these deficiencies, there would be ample accommodation for all comers. There are but very few houses where lodgings can be had, either for love or money, and if you have not taken the precaution of bringing down a leg of mutton, or some trifle of that kind, in your portmanteau or your pocket—a matter which wholly escaped my forethought—you are likely enough to go without a dinner. After a while, you fall into the ways of the people, and taking thought for to-morrow, order your provisions in good time; but new comers would do well to bring some creature-comforts with them, to begin with. Another matter which causes some little uneasiness to a stranger is to observe how frequently he is threatened with being prosecuted with the utmost

rigor of the law. Placards bearing this frightful menace stare at him from fields and gardens, and meet his terrified gaze in every direction. Notices that "no shooting nor dogs are allowed" are of continual recurrence. But the most appalling intimation of all is one to be read upon a white gate near the railway-station. It runs thus:—"Whoever does not shut this gate will be prosecuted." It was wide open the first time I saw it. What was I to do? My teeth chattered in my head, my hair stood on end. I was "distilled to jelly with the act of fear." Oh, dear me! what was I to do? It was not I who had left the gate open—deuce take it! Then, why the dickens should I be compelled to shut it? Answer me that. And yet if I left it open, I was to be prosecuted! Tell it not in Chelsea, let it not be heard in St. John's Wood—I *did* leave it open! As a free-born Briton, I scorned to be bullied. So I walked away, leaving the gate as I had found it. Don't you think I was right? Would not you have done the same? How should any man dare to threaten me with prosecution for not shutting his trumpery gate? Let him shut it himself—freckle him!

Hayling is a very paradise for Sabbatarians! If little is doing on week-days, nothing is doing on Sundays. The whole island seems asleep. Speak low! "Break not, ye zephyrs, your chain of repose!" You cannot get out of the island on a Sunday, unless indeed you choose to take the ferry across to Cumberland Fort, or to walk over that interminable bridge near Langston, and all the way into Havant. The Colly-Wobble Railway is locked up; so, too, is the station; no train runs; the stately old engine-driver is puffing his pipe majestically in front of his cottage; the many-handed guard—

he of the blue eyes and the straw-colored beard — is enjoying well-earned sleep either by his fireside or in the parish church, while the parson preacheth. And talking of churches, there are two—one, a comely, spacious edifice in South Hayling, the other a much smaller building of immemorial antiquity in the north. Among the monuments in the latter is one to Sarah Rogers, who many years ago died in her youth. It bears this inscription :—

> "Ye virgins fair, your fleeting charms survey,
> She once was all your tender hearts can say;
> Let opening rose and drooping lilies tell,
> Like them she bloomed, and, ah! like them she fell."

This epitaph, written, as they tell you, by a young farmer, is surely very beautiful, for its sweet, simple imagery, and gentle, unaffected pathos.

No. II.

The charm of a circle is its roundness ; of a woman, her temper ; of the tranquil island its tranquillity. It is only a man whose sad fate it is to dwell, for the greater part of the year, in a city full of discordant clamor, who can appreciate at its true worth the delightful taciturnity of the country. Arrived at some serene place where few other sounds salute his ear than the tinkling song of the brook, the warbling of the birds, or the sighing of the zephyrs through the trees, peace falls upon his spirit like a delicious trance, and it is not without a shudder that his thoughts revert to the thousand-tongued

Babylon from which he has escaped, where, not content with the uproar of myriads of wheels, men allow their nerves to be agonized, their health to be destroyed, and their peace of mind to be ruined by a variety of preventable and wholly unnecessary noises. Cock-crowing, dog-barking, and all the abominable discords of street music for example, are nuisances which might easily be prohibited. They are permitted, and even encouraged, to the misery of thousands and the discomfort of all. There is in the tragedy of *Othello* an exquisite bit of comedy between a clown and a couple of musicians. It is always omitted on the stage, and the more is the pity, for the fun, though brief, is very pungent. A couple of pipers are playing in front of the Moor's castle in Cyprus. Out comes the Clown, who accosts them thus: "Masters, here's money for you; and the General so likes your music that he desires you, of all love, to make no more noise with it." To which the first musician replies, "Well, sir, we will not." "If," rejoins the Clown, "you have any music that may not be heard, to it again! but, as they say, to *hear* music the General does not greatly care." We have none such, sir," makes answer the musician. "Then," returns the Clown in a tone of high command, "put your pipes in your bag: go! Vanish into air; away!" and the musicians depart accordingly. Now that is just the way in which vagabond minstrels, whether in town or country, ought to be treated; only that there is no reason why they should be paid for not torturing us. They should be compelled to "vanish" no richer than they had come. In Hayling there is no street-music; nor, indeed, any street, for the matter of that. The oldest inhabitant cannot remember to have ever seen or heard either an organ-fiend or a hurdy-gur-

dy-demon on the island; but then, to be sure, the oldest inhabitant is celebrated all the world over for never remembering anything, so that his evidence does not go for much. For my own part, I can conscientiously declare that the only music I have heard during my residence here has been the lowing of a cow and the sweet pipe of the robin redbreast. The place seems to be swarming with robins, and they sing with all their might and main from every other branch. But you must not run away with the idea that no noise whatever besides this is to be heard in the island. Of course you may think so if you please; I don't mind; but it is not the fact. Great guns are being fired so continuously for hours together from the batteries at Portsmouth and Portsea, and the report of the artillery comes booming across the ocean with an effect so alarmingly suggestive of maritime warfare, that a visitor of lively imagination and weak intellect might easily fancy that a succession of sea fights between the English and French was going on every day in the week.

The primitive habits of the Haylingers are delightful to behold. Theirs is a sweet, lovely, dead-alive—yea, much more dead than alive—old-world sort of island, where customs and practices which have long since disappeared from busier regions still flourish in primeval luxuriance. Spade-husbandry is said to be still in great favor with the farmers, though ploughing also is practised on every farm, and nobody who knows anything about agriculture (which I do not) can fail to be struck with the admirable skill of the ploughmen in their calling, their furrows being as straight as arrows. The furrows on their brows are semi-circular. It is a "harrowing" sight to see the peasants harrowing, for they don't

seem to care three halfpence what discomfort they may cause to the snails and earthworms. (The price of this pun is £5. Post Office orders payable to me at the office of the publishers.) Not having any authentic information upon the matter, either one way or the other, I am justified in asserting with the peremptory positiveness of ignorance that there is no such thing as a steam-plough in the whole island. Most assuredly I have never seen one. Thrashing is still done in most places with the flail, though I know to my cost that there is a winnowing machine in North Hayling, for I was riding on the outside of a horse who, taking fright at its confounded whizzing and rolling, bolted, and would infallibly have thrown me had I not given him his head and let him have his own way. The sea was the saving of me, for when he came face to face with it his heart failed him, the cowardly brute, and rather than plunge into the briny he came to a dead stop, and it needed no little persuasion to induce him to jog home at a sling trot.

That the Island of Tranquil Delights is indeed an abode of Arcadian simplicity, where even the ladies cling fondly to the fashions of the olden time, when every one was good, may be inferred from the fact, or rather the facts, that since my arrival here I have seen one woman in a bonnet and another with pattens on. Ah, me! how the memory of my salad days came back upon me as I gazed upon both gentlewomen! I was a very young man indeed when last I saw a bonnet. I was a child—a mere "ch-ee-i-l-d," like a dear friend of mine in Pembridge Square—when last I saw a pair of pattens. But it is not the ladies alone who are conservative of old habits in the Tranquil Island. I have met one man with straps to his trousers, another walking

about in a blue swallow-tailed coat with brass-buttons! Old-fashioned signs still swing in front of the wayside inns. Thus, for example, the "Olive Leaf Inn," kept by Mr. W. Goldring, coxswain of the Lifeboat, is signalized by a fairly-executed painting of a gammon of bacon, which the artist must have evolved from his inner consciousness, even as the German did his famous camel, for no such article of food is to be found in the island. The sign called to mind Oliver Goldsmith's well-known couplet—

> "As in some Irish houses, where things are so-so,
> A gammon of bacon hangs up for a show."

A gentleman named Romeo Coombs keeps the "May Pole Inn," which has the look of a comfortable hostelry; and hard-by is the shop of Mr. Barber, who advertises himself as a vendor of coffee, tea, tobacco, snuff, and pepper. His customers consume all these five articles simultaneously, and the effect upon their digestion is something surprising. But I grieve to say that greed of gain is not wholly unknown to the Haylingers. Of this sad fact we have a proof in the wanton destruction, a few months ago, of a magnificent yew tree, which once stood in front of the "Yew Tree Inn." The tree in question is believed to have been 700 years old. It was cut down in the bloom of its verdant tree-hood, while the village children were sporting beneath its immemorial branches. I was very indignant indeed when I was told of this act of Vandalism. I asked whether Mr. Gladstone, hatchet in hand, had been seen in these parts of late? No; he had not. I will do him the justice to say that in this case, at all events, his conscience is clear. The tree was killed by order of a lady; and

right glad was I to hear that she only realized something like 4*l.* from the sale of its noble corse.

Whenever I visit a strange place I make a point of acquiring all particulars respecting the constabulary. You are, of course, at liberty to draw what uncharitable inference you please from this avowal. "My withers are unwrung;" so I can afford to disregard your insinuations. The Island of Tranquil Delights boasts of but one policeman, a fact which speaks volumes, nay libraries, for the good conduct of the inhabitants. That population must indeed be virtuous which can be kept in order by one solitary "Bobby." He is an admirable person—indeed quite a superior person—estimable as a man, inestimable as a policeman. If you would hear more about him, know that he is a thick-set, sinewy, right-honest-looking fellow, hard as nails, with hair the color of the red, red rose which sweetly blooms in June, cheeks like pulpit cushions, and—alas! that I should say so—women's eyes.

I don't object to women's eyes in women's heads; by no means: there they are the right eyes in the right heads; but I confess I do not like to see the starry orbs of the angelic sex beneath a male brow. In all other respects the policeman of Hayling is a delightful being, strong as a lion and intellectual as a lady. His uniform fits him as tightly as a suit of sticking-plaster. How he ever gets into it exceeds my comprehension, for he is full of habit, though by no means scant o' breath. But he looks beautiful in his coat of office, let me tell you; and I believe there is not "a more desartless man to be constable" than he on the face of the habitable globe. You should see him tearing through a turnip field at the rate of five miles an hour on no business whatever, for

it is inconceivable that he can have anything to do. A policeman without prisoners is like a doctor without patients; and as nobody in Hayling ever does anything to warrant his or her being taken up, it stands to reason that the policeman can have nothing upon his hands except his gloves. There is no one to "run in," and even though there were, it would be out of the question for the policeman to treat him so, for there is nowhere to "run" him into unless it be the sea. Jails there are none in Hayling, and nobody is ever punished for anything. You are at perfect liberty to do or say what you please; so the policeman, lucky wight! has nothing to do, and is well paid for doing it. I had a pleasant chat with him yesterday evening. He assured me that the Haylingers are simply the most honorable people in the whole world. Touch their honor, touch their life. He illustrated the fact by an amusing story, the truthfulness of which he personally avouched. It seems that there are two chimney-sweeps in the island: the one in the north parish, the other in the south. They have their professional jealousies, but otherwise they were good friends enough until one day last week, when Jim the Northern accused Bill the Southern of having stolen his knife. Bill's rage and indignation knew no bounds. A perfect hive of capital "B's" came swarming from his lips. His language was vascular and imprecatory in the extreme. He had not stolen the knife; not he; he would scorn the action. "Look here, Jim," he said, in an ecstasy of virtuous wrath, "I never see'd your knife in my born days; I never knowed you had a knife." And so saying he went on to unsphere the stars with swearing. He swore like any trooper, heaped oath upon oath, and wound up by invoking upon his eyes and other

portions of his person the most appalling curses if he had ever even beheld the knife, much more stolen it. Jim heard him out with patient attention and then quietly asked, "Will you say upon your honor, Bill?" "Ah! well," replied Bill, in tones of heroic resignation, "if you put it that way—*there's the knife!*" and as he spoke he drew the article solemnly out of his pocket and placed it in the hands of his brother sweep. "What do you think of that, sir?" asked my friend the policeman. "Ain't that touching? Ain't we a honorable people? Catch a London sweep behaving so! He couldn't do it no how."

Besides the policeman, there is at least one other local celebrity whose acquaintance the visitor will do well to make. I mean Mr. Evens, the ferryman, whose mission it is to row travellers in an open boat across the arm of the sea which sunders Hayling from Cumberland Fort. Mr. Evens is an elderly and highly-respectable person, with a face like a brick-bat. The color and expression of his countenance reminds you of the red lamp affixed at night to the last carriage of a railway train. He is a very nice man, but he is somewhat hard of hearing. Oh, 'eavens! Evens! how long I did keep shouting for you the other day before I could attract your attention. When you came at last you told me you had been "up the dock in search of coal," whereupon a pretty little Hayling girl in the boat laughed slily and winked at me. What she meant I know not—shall never know; but upon my word of honor, Mr. Evens, she both laughed and winked. Moreover, she told me that she sometimes spends the best part of an hour in hailing you over the sea, whereupon a very bright boy, whose name I discovered—let

posterity take note of it!—to be Alfred Kuckky, exclaimed, with a smile like a sunbeam, "I suppose that's the reason it is called Hayling Island." That boy will get on. I have already procured a commission for him from Mr. Arthur Swanborough to write the next burlesque for the Strand Theatre.

Ah, me! My paper is well nigh covered. My ink runs low. My candle flickers in the socket. My eyes grow dim. My head throbs painfully. I am very tired. Oh! my friends and friendesses, you little know what I go through for your sake or how hard I work in your service. Hark! What's that? The clock as I live, chiming half-past one o'clock in the morning! And here am I toiling away for the B.P. instead of taking mine ease in this Island of Tranquil Delights. Alas! and a-well-a-day! forgive the sins of these erratic essays and pity the afflicted being who pens them for your sake. Tranquil Delights, quotha! Marry, come up! Go to! Tranquil Delights! Where be they? Not in the soul of the weekly essayist, wherever else they be. I am very, very tired. Oh! for a week of sleep—sleep placid and profound—sleep balmy and delicious—sleep such as I knew when I was a boy and shall never know again! But a truce to sad thoughts. The night wears on a-pace. The charming verses of Mr. Planché fall upon my memory like delightful music. Oh, reader mine, lay them to heart:—

"One word for the author whom often
You've hailed as your holiday bard,
There really is something to soften
The heart of the critic most hard.
The mind of the man who must measure
The taste of the town as he writes,
Is not quite a Palace of Pleasure
In an Island of Tranquil Delights."

WEDDINGS.

AS I was sauntering through Northumberland Avenue last Thursday, and bethinking me of the strange remark of my friend, the O'Finnigan O, that the removal of Northumberland House is "a great addition to London," who, think you, should knock up against me but Beebumble? The clock of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields—where be those fields now?—was chiming three, and Beebumble was running for his dear life to catch a train a few yards distant, which was not to start till a quarter to four. "*Do* take it easy, my dear friend," I expostulated, "and let us have a stroll together along the Embankment. You may take my word for it that you are long before your time." So we loafed off together, though not without much reluctance at first on his part, for he was in an agony of terror lest Mrs. Beebumble should be waiting for him at the station. I promised to accompany him to the train with strict punctuality, and to receive upon my own devoted head the vials of matrimonial wrath designed for him, in the event of Mrs. Beebumble "cutting up rusty," as he profanely phrased it. His alarm thereupon subsided, and after he had made me cry, as you know is his invariable habit, by the vice-like cordiality with which he wrenches my hand, we launched into conversation and had a cosy chat. Observing that he looked even more unhappy than usual, I asked him what was the matter with him. A smile like a spasm broke bitterly over his face, as he replied that he had been at a wedding the day before, and had

never since been able to get up his spirits. "A wedding," said I, "*that* is usually regarded as a joyous occasion." "It depends upon circumstances," rejoined my friend, "and circumstances alter cases, as the cat said when she jumped upon the printers' frames;" and once more the comic spasm stole over his melancholy features. "The wedding has made you witty," quoth I, "and you are talking diamonds." "Alas! alas!" he answered, "my wit is of the dullest, for my heart is as heavy as lead. Ah, me! how well I remember my own wedding. It was an awful affair; yet this I will say,—Mrs. Beebumble looked magnificent in her bridal dress, *that* she did." "I can quite believe it. She looks magnificent to this day." "Ah!" he replied, with a sigh, "you would say so if you could see her in a passion; you only see her in repose; she is beautiful in repose, but in a passion she is sublime. The battle of Waterloo was a Quakers' meeting compared to the row she kicks up when she is angry with *me*." "You are indeed a fortunate man," I rejoined. "Well," quoth he, "perhaps I am, for there is no denying that she is a monstrous fine woman." "There can be no question about it, Beebumble; I should imagine that Mrs. Beebumble weighs sixteen stone, if she weighs an ounce." "Sixteen stone seven ounces, sir, by Read's weighing-machine, which she broke in being weighed at the Camden Road Station on Saturday last," said the little man, drawing himself up majestically; "but between you and me, she leads me the life of a skinned eel on a red hot frying-pan, and I am mortally afraid of her." "Mrs. Beebumble is to be envied," I made answer; "the woman who succeeds in making her husband afraid of her has good cause to be proud. She is an ornament to

her sex." "That may be," returned Beebumble—and as he spoke, his voice sank to a whisper, and he looked timidly around, as though he feared to be overheard—"but she is a scourge to ours. Mrs. Beebumble is, indeed, as you say, a monstrous fine woman, but the thought of a wedding gives me the heart-quake. She won't catch me marrying her again in a hurry," and once more the spasm-like smile half-illumined, half-distorted his sorrowful face. We went on discoursing in this reckless, frivolous style, to the utter ruin of common-sense, and the great delight of our enemies—could they but have heard us, which, thank Heaven! they did not—till the sad hour for parting arrived. At the appointed moment I delivered him into the many-dimpled hands of that armful of joy, Mrs. Beebumble. She rewarded me with a smile, of which, not wishing to speak hyperbolically, I will simply say that the sun was a fool to it. But somehow I can't help thinking that Beebumble "caught it," for not having been at Charing Cross an hour before the arrival of his fair Philistine, for as he leant out of the carriage window to wave me a last farewell while the train steamed asthmatically out of the station, he looked very miserable. Poor fellow!

Never since then have I been able to get matters matrimonial out of my head. By day and by night I still keep thinking of or dreaming about weddings. What wonderful things they are, to be sure, and how marvellous is the interest they inspire in women of all ranks and ages—maids, wives, and widows alike! When a lady of any position in society is to be married, the female parishioners one and all seem to get wind of it by some mystical means beyond male apprehension, and on the morning of her wedding-day the church is found

to be crammed from the communion-table to the porch, with a congregation in which there are probably twenty women for one man. What delight and curiosity, what impatience of delay, what eagerness of attention are depicted on every female countenance! Their faces are alive with excitement. And all for what? Can it be that the wives and widows renew in imagination the triumphs of the past, while the spinsters luxuriate in a fanciful foretaste of the glories which they fondly believe to be in store for themselves? Or is the sex's pride of conquest at the bottom of all this brilliant emotion, and are the feelings of the lovely spectators, as they see one of their sisters walking victoriously down the aisle, while she leans upon the arm of her "groom," akin to those of the anglers who watch a brother of the gentle craft engaged in the act of "landing" his fish? It is impossible to say, at least it is impossible for a man to say, though of course the ladies know all about it, and could enlighten us, if they pleased, but they don't. To the masculine mind—if creatures of the sex masculine can be said to have a mind—the whole affair is an impenetrable mystery, and the man most hopelessly in the dark is probably the bridegroom. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he does not want to be trotted out as a raree-show; he finds no pleasure in being gazed at by a thousand eyes, though those eyes be as bright as the stars of the firmament; he cannot, for the life of him, make out what it is all about; he fails to perceive what matter of interest it can be to all these people that he, whom they never saw before, and may never again see, thinks fit to take to wife a lady of whom they are equally ignorant; he grows as white as a sheet, and hardly knows whether he is standing upon his head or his heels; he

is dragged an insensate victim at the chariot-wheels of fashion, and cannot help himself. When he has arrived at the matrimonial block, out marches the executioner, looking so solemn and starchy in his surplice, that whatever faint vestige of courage may have survived in the bridegroom vanishes at the sight of him, and he gets so bewildered that he has scarcely voice enough left to give a faltering answer in the affirmative to the momentous question whether he will take for his wife the beautiful enchantress who has brought him to this pass. Meanwhile, glance at the bride! How bright and blest she looks, how radiant and benign, how serenely happy and self-possessed! To the Parson's inquiry whether she will accept the bridegroom for her husband, she replies, with calm confidence, in tones as clear as a silver bell, "I will;" and she means it. Her courage is as great as her joy. She is as intrepid as lovely, and though she is the cynosure of all eyes, she never flinches. Her sweet composure, and tranquil, lady-like grace enhance beyond expression the charms of her beauty, and when the ceremony is over, she is still as "fresh as morning roses newly washed with dew," to quote the words of William the Divine. All this is very, very wonderful, and may well engage the speculations of philosophers to get at the true cause and meaning of it. Oh! how I should like to be a bride. But I never shall be one: I begin to despair. The newly-wedded couple, with their train attendant of gleeful relatives, and their fair precursors, shedding flowers upon their path, having walked out of the church, amid the clashing of joy bells and the inspiriting strains of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," played thunderingly upon the organ, repair to the house of the bride's parents, there to partake of an entertain-

ment sumptuous as incomprehensible. This proceeding, however irrational, would appear to be of venerable antiquity, seeing that Ben Johnson, in one of his comedies, enjoins the wedding guests, the wedding being over, to hie them to the father's dwelling, there to take part in the brilliant festivities :—

> "With the phant'sies of hey-troll
> Troll about the bridal bowl,
> And divide the broad bride-cake
> Round about the bride's stake."

The cake in question, wherein, as some unamiable curmudgeons have been wont to assert, dwell all the sweets of matrimony, is one of these curious "institutions" which survive the lapse of time and the vicissitudes of fashion. Empires fall, crowns totter, dynasties decay, but the wedding-cake still maintains its ground. Its magical properties, however, are sadly on the wane, and the day is gone when people care to follow the example of the gentleman mentioned in the *Spectator*, who, "being resolved to try his fortune, and that he might be sure of dreaming pleasantly upon something at night, procured a handsome slice of bride-cake, which he placed very conveniently under his pillow." It is to be hoped that he left it there till morning, for his dreams would not have been of the pleasantest had he awakened in the middle of the night and eaten it. *Surgit semper*, etc., and the demon of indigestion has masked himself ere now even in so fascinating a shape as "a handsome slice of bride-cake." The learned in material and moral analogies might find a theme for erudite inquiry even in this matter, and trace some manner of resemblance between the gorgeous piece of unwholesome confection-

ery which makes one's lips water and one's stomach ache, and the delusive visions of those lovers who, as Mr. H. J. Byron wittily expresses it, are "spoons before marriage and knives and forks after." But everything about a wedding breakfast is contradictory and inconsistent. It is a matter of course, and in fact quite *de rigueur*, that somebody must cry, though why or wherefore nobody could ever understand. There is but one thing better than keeping your daughter, and that is to give her away—not to throw her away, to be sure, but to give her away to an honest man ; and as every bridegroom is believed to be such a person until his villany is revealed, like that of other criminals, the occasion is, for the present at all events, one rather for smiles than tears. On the other hand, a vast deal of twaddle in the way of felicitation is undoubtedly spoken on these bridal occasions. The speeches at a wedding-breakfast usually begin where common sense ends. From all lips come words of jocose congratulation, mingled with fervid aspirations for long life and happiness to the bride and bridegroom ; but inasmuch as long life is an event of very rare occurrence, and nobody ever yet was happy, these wishes, however friendly, are a trifle foolish. "Nothing," observes the wicked Lord Lyttelton, "is so absurd as the tide of felicitations which flows in upon a poor newly married man, before he himself can determine —and much less the complimenting world—upon the propriety of them. Marriage is the grand lottery of life, and it is as great a folly to exult upon entering into it as on the purchase of a ticket in the State Wheel of Fortune. It is when the ticket has drawn a prize that we can answer to congratulations." This is every bit as true of the bride as of the bridegroom, and there is a

touch of grim agony in the thought that at the very time when the bridesmaids are scattering rosy smiles around, and the "funny man" at the table is cracking his vapid jokes, the heroine of the occasion may possibly be haunted by the suspicion that, after all, she has married the wrong man; while he, poor wretch! may not be without misgivings that he, too, has wedded the wrong woman. Matrimony is, as the old pun goes, too often a mere matter of money. An American essayist has defined it most ungallantly as originating in an insane desire on the part of a young man to pay for the board and lodging of a young woman. It sometimes happens, to be sure, that it is the young woman who pays for the board and lodging of the young man; but, however that may be, this, at least, is certain, that a *mariage de convenance* gives little promise of felicity, and that the compliments and good-wishes of the wedding guests on such an occasion, however kindly meant and gracefully expressed, are the merest moonshine. It matters not how rich the bride-cake may be, or how beautiful the trousseau, or how large the dowry, or how sumptuous the breakfast, or how numerous the old slippers, or how thick the shower of rice wherewith the newly-wedded couple may be pelted into their carriage, a wedding is a sham, and there is not the faintest chance of comfort in the marriage state, unless the bride, standing defiantly upon the rights of her sex, have made up her mind that man and wife are one, and that one is the WIFE.

THE DELIGHT OF EARLY RISING.

THERE is one way, and one only, of enjoying life, and that is to rise early. "*Dilliculo surgere saluberrimum est*," says the classic proverb, and no truer words were ever either written or uttered. All good and wise men are of accord in denouncing the absurdity, not to say the sinfulness, of lying late in bed. "I would have inscribed on the curtains of your bed and the walls of your chamber—if you do not rise early, you can make progress in nothing. If you do not set apart your hours of reading, if you suffer yourself, or any one else, to break in upon them, your days will slip through your hands unprofitable and frivolous, and unenjoyed by yourself." So spake the great Lord Chatham. "The difference," says Dr. Doddridge, "between rising at five and seven o'clock in the morning for the space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life." In the year 1784, Dr. Franklin published an ingenious essay on the advantages of early rising as a mere piece of economy. He estimated the saving that might be made in Paris alone by using sunshine instead of candles at ninety-six millions of French livres, or four millions sterling per annum. Dr. Todd is dogmatic and peremptory in inculcating the necessity of being up with the lark, or, if possible, before him. "Few," quoth he, "ever lived to a great age, and fewer still ever became distinguished, who were not in the habit of early rising. You

rise late, and of course commence your business at a late hour, and everything goes wrong all day." "He who rises late," remarks an old writer, "may trot all day, and not have overtaken his business at night." Dean Swift avers that he never knew any man come to greatness and eminence who lay abed of a morning. Boswell tells us that Lord Monboddo used to awake every morning at four, and then for his health walk in his room naked, with the window open, which he called taking an air-bath; after which he would go to bed again and sleep two hours more. Johnson, who was always ready to beat down anything that seemed to be exhibited with disproportionate importance, observed, "I suppose, sir, there is no more in it than this: he wakes at four and cannot sleep till he chills himself, and makes the warmth of the bed a grateful sensation." This gruff commentary is worthy of the Bear of Bolt Court, who, unable to emulate the virtue of the Scottish peer, found a surly pleasure in depreciating it. In his more genial moments, when envy did not embitter his heart, nor prejudice warp his judgment, Johnson would wax eloquent upon the benefits of early rising, and deplore the degeneracy of his own nature which usually kept him in bed till two o'clock in the afternoon.

Great as is the injury to a man's business from the habit of late rising, the detriment to his health and happiness from the same inglorious cause is still more grievous. The morning air out of doors is at no other period so pure, pungent and exhilarating as at daybreak. It is a fact conclusively established by universal observation, and physiologists have not failed to call attention to it, that the hair of an early riser defies the

snow-storms of age, and retains its natural color to the last. When I mentioned this amazing circumstance the other day to my friend Penthorn, who never gets up before noon, what do you suppose was his reply? "That only bears out the old French proverb, '*La tête d'un fou ne blanchit jamais*,' which, translated into English meaneth, 'A fool's head never grows grey.'" Now, bearing in mind that my hair is as brown as a berry, and that I am up at cock-crow every day of my life, I cannot help thinking that this remark of Penthorn's was uncalled for, to say the least of it. I will tell Mrs. Penthorn of it the next time I see her, and if she do not put Penthorn on a short allowance of kisses for a month to come I shall be indeed surprised. The man who is doomed to the ignoble bondage of bed at the very hour when nature is most glorious and gladsome, and when, bathed in brilliant sunshine, the world itself looks newly-made, is indeed an object for compassion. I verily believe that Penthorn has never seen the sun rise, and that he will pass into Paradise without having once witnessed it. Yet what a sublime spectacle it is! *Crede experto.* I saw it this very day from the middle of Hampstead Heath; nor I alone, but my bull-dog as well, bless him!—

> "Yes, 'tis no doubt a sight to see when breaks
> Bright Phœbus, while the mountains still are wet
> With mist, and every bird with him awakes,
> And Night is flung off, like a mourning suit
> Worn for a husband—or some other brute."

Just so! What can be more delightful than to sally forth, with a short pipe in your mouth and a bull-dog at your heels, for a long walk through a picturesque country at daybreak on a summer's day! How fresh and

fragrant is the air! How joyous is "the breezy call of incense-breathing morn!" The sky is a luminous dome of azure, curtained with silver clouds, the foliage looks as green as an emerald, and the dewdrops sparkle like liquid diamonds upon every spray. You tread the earth with a light, elastic step, aromatizing the zephyrs as they sigh past you with the fumes of Bristol Bird's-eye. All this is pleasant enough, under ordinary circumstances, but it is still more enjoyable if there have been a frost over-night, for then the landscape wins new charms from the state of the atmosphere, and the dry, bracing air qualifies you to enjoy them with the keenest zest. The whole landscape is suffused in new-born light, and glitters with icicles, and nothing that the most poetic imagination can picture to itself of fanciful and effulgent can surpass the radiant reality of the beams dancing upon the crystallized rime with which trees and hedge-rows are begemmed:—

> "Falsely luxurious, will not man awake;
> And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
> The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
> To meditation due and sacred song?
> For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise?
> To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
> The fleeting moments of too short a life,
> Total extinction of the enlighten'd soul!
> Or else to feverish vanity alive,
> Wilder'd and tossing through distemper'd dreams?
> Who would in such a gloomy state remain
> Longer than nature craves, when every muse
> And every blooming pleasure waits without,
> To bless the wildly-devious morning walk?"

So sings the Poet of the Seasons. But if the morning walk is so delightful, what shall be said in praise of the

morning ride? To spring out of your bed into your bath, and thence into your saddle (as is the invariable practice of that king of good fellows, my friend Dick Belward) for a gallop royal over the crisp breezy downs, or along the yellow sands of the sea which foams and flashes in the orient light, is to partake of one of the manliest, noblest enjoyments of which human nature is capable. The people who may see you tearing away in this wild fashion will probably conclude that you are out of your mind, and the beauty of it is they will not be far wrong; but what of that? Surely you have a right to be happy after your own lunatic fashion.

It is a common error to suppose that to enjoy the pleasures and advantages incidental to early rising you must of necessity live in the country. No such thing. Those pleasures and advantages are within the reach of Londoners as well, though, of course, under circumstances altogether unlike those with which country folk are familiar. A stroll through the streets of London, or along the Thames Embankment, at daybreak, is suggestive of "thoughts that do lie too deep for words." The silence of the myriad-tongued city is singularly impressive. So also is its solitude. There is no one about but the drowsy policemen, the workmen trudging to the scenes of their daily toil, or the votaries of pleasure fulfilling their bacchanalian resolve not to go home till morning—till daylight does appear. But even these apparitions are of but rare occurrence. You may roam through many streets without meeting a human being. The architecture stands out in clear bold relief against the cold cloudless sky, and it is wonderful to observe how much taller the houses look at dawn than at noontide. They seem to gain in height, owing to the absence of way-

farers, the average standard of human stature. All this, and many things besides, are curious and interesting to observe. In the depth of winter, when the east wind is blowing razors, and the cold, clammy fog is so dense that it might be kicked, as well, indeed, it deserves to be, you will do essential service to your health by leaving your cosy, warm bed at daybreak, and strolling pensively along the banks of the Regent's Canal, or through the lanes and alleys of the Isle of Dogs. Even though you should renounce such *al fresco* delights, tempting though they be, you will still find ample reward for the trouble of turning out of the blankets at dawn in mooning from one room to another of your house—they all look so bright, cheerful and tidy in the dim twilight, before the housemaids are astir. But these, and all kindred joys, are lost to the sluggard—pitiful drone! For my own part, I have not quite made up my mind whether I would call that man "friend" who is not out and about at 5 o'clock in the summer or 6 in winter. I hardly think I should do so, unless he were very rich, and had remembered me handsomely in his will. To conclude, you may (if you like) take my word for it, that of all habits, that of early rising is the most sensible and salubrious, for sleep is mere waste of time, and nothing in bed becomes us like the leaving it.

THE REIGN OF RAIN.

IT may be said of Rain as truly as of Fire, that it is a good servant, but a bad master. For some weeks past we have been under its relentless dominion, with a result to ourselves anything rather than agreeable. What we especially resent and feel to be a peculiar hardship, is the wretched monotony of such a condition of climate as has of late prevailed. When heavy rain is accompanied by high winds, the effect, if not comfortable, is at least picturesque. Nature in a passion is, under all circumstances, a magnificent spectacle. No man, not hopelessly insensible to the charms of the sublime and beautiful, can view without admiration the grand disarray of the ocean when wind and wave are in desperate conflict, the rack of rain-charged clouds in a tempestuous sky, the impetuous torrent of a mountain stream, or the writhing of giant trees in the grasp of the winter blast. These are splendid sights, only to be surpassed by the matchless exhibition of a lady angry with her husband. Storms of all descriptions are delightful to hear and to behold. It is fine to listen to the thunder rolling, finer still to see the lightning flashing, the very sense of danger giving greater zest to enjoyment. The rattling of hail-stones upon the roof of a green house is melodious to a refined ear; so, too, is the rustling of autumnal breezes through a forest; so, likewise is the clamor of a loving tongue when you come home late at night. The toppling of a chimney-pot about your head speaks eloquently of atmospheric

disturbance, and has an enchanting sound. There are few things lovelier to gaze upon than a snow-storm, more particularly in a desolate landscape, say, for example, upon Salisbury Plain; and the general picturesqueness of the scene is incalculably enhanced by the presence of a sweep or a Methodist parson right in the middle of the vast expanse, the dark costume of either gentleman telling against the dazzling whiteness all round with an exquisite contrast of color. In these and all kindred spectacles there is a certain dramatic sentiment which makes us oblivious of personal discomfort, in our ardent recognition of the appeal to our poetic sympathies. But there is nothing either dramatic or picturesque, nothing either to interest or excite us, in one unvarying down-pour of rain, falling morning, noon, and night for weeks together, out of leaden skies, upon the soddened earth below. Not a zephyr blows: not a leaf stirs: not a cloud is to be seen: the brave over-hanging firmament is a dome of brown vapors: and down comes the rain, the weary, dreary rain, in a dismal deluge, blotting and blearing everything, and destroying all distinction between flood and field. The effect upon the spirits is little less than heart-breaking. The only comfort is to know that the most inveterate of grumblers can no longer assert that the weather in England is "unsettled." Settled indeed it is, with a vengeance; and unless it soon mend, it will "settle" us as well.

The poets have much to answer for in having bestowed such panegyrics upon Rain. It is all very well for Shakespeare to sing the praises of Mercy, which droppeth like the gentle rain from Heaven upon the place beneath, but Mercy coming in inundations comparable to the torrents with which we have been of late

afflicted would be a very questionable favor. Milton talks of ladies whose eyes "rain influence," but that "influence" must be somewhat perilous which bears resemblance to the rain of the present summer. Spencer in his "Fate of the Butterflies," envies Jupiter his prerogatives as "Pluvius," and seems to think that to "rain in th' aire" is indeed a celestial privilege:—

> "What more felicitie can fall to creature
> Than to enjoy delight with libertie,
> And to be Lord of all the Workes of Nature;
> To rain in th' aire from earth to lightest skie,
> To feed on flowers and weeds of glorious feature?"

"Delight with libertie" were indeed an enviable lot, but what chance of "libertie" have we under the reign of Rain? Mr. Abraham Cowley was not without warrant for his melodious utterances, when he declared that,

> "The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
> And drinks, and gapes for drink again;
> The plants suck in the earth, and are
> With constant drinking fresh and fair."

The verse is charming, and the Bacchanalian inference is not to be resisted, but beyond that point the analogy may not be carried. Man is not a hollyhock, nor is woman a geranium, and neither the one nor the other is any the better for the drenching rains that give beauty and brightness to either flower. A hollyhock need not fear rheumatism; and geraniums, not having noses, do not catch cold in them, as is the unhappy habit of human beings. When sunshine has succeeded shower, a garden looks all the gladder for copious rains; but to tell me that a street has a happier expression while

being deluged with rain for days, or it may be weeks together, is to affront my understanding. The premonitory symptoms of rain are dolorous in the extreme, and foretell all too truly the discomfort that is approaching :—

> "Careful observers may foretell the hour
> (By sure prognostics) when to dread a shower;
> While rain depends, the pensive cat gives o'er
> Her frolics, and pursues her tail no more.
> If you be wise, then go not far to dine,
> You'll spend in coach-hire more than save in wine;
> A coming shower your shooting corns presage,
> Old aches will throb, your hollow tooth will rage."

Of the truth of these reflections we Londoners have had ample experience during the present month. As for London herself—"Imperial Augusta," as she was wont to be designated—what could be more miserable, what more rueful and disconsolate than her general aspect and expression? Look where we might, we saw objects equally provocative of pity and ridicule. It makes one's heart bleed to think of the policemen. Those hard helmets of theirs look like inverted colanders, and their "skimpy" little capes seem fashioned for the express purpose of conducting the rain in copious rivulets over their dear knees and down the whole length of their delightful legs. Why are not the "Bobbies" permitted to wear "Ulsters," or why are they not decked out in long-skirted dressing-gowns? Soaking with rain, as they are, how should these noble fellows be in a fitting condition to carry on the war with itinerant "costers," or to punch the heads of the public? To require such achievements from men drenched to the skin, and shivering all over like dogs in wet sacks, were to over-tax the mettle of the most heroic natures. The omnibus

conductors are in still more piteous plight, for whereas the "Peeler" may stand up for a while under a doorway, or dive on the sly down an area or into a pot-house, the conductor has no such resource. Mounted upon his monkey-board, and often miserably clad, he must abide as best as he may the pelting of the rain, and need not hope for one shred of shelter. His case is all the more dreadful to think of, that there is really no intelligible reason why he should be exposed to any such hardship. No rational cause has ever yet been assigned, or is, indeed capable of assignation, why the London conductors should not, like their colleagues of the Continental and American cities, be provided with a canopy of some sort to protect them from the weather. When dogs shall have been furnished with an adequate number of hospitals and asylums, and when cats shall have been supplied with "homes" of sufficient luxury, it will perhaps occur to the benevolent to bestow a thought upon their fellow-creatures—the martyrs of the omnibuses and tram-cars. Very woeful and full to overflowing with sorrow and solicitude is the destiny of the London postman, who, wearing a cape still "skimpier" than that of the policeman, has to trudge through the streets all day long till 10 o'clock at night, amid torrents of rain, distributing as he goes letters well-nigh as humid as himself. He is in the main a civil, well-conducted fellow, and deserves greater consideration than is usually shown to him. But these are not the only sufferers during the reign of rain. All classes of citizens suffer, though of course in various ways and different degrees. The visitation falls, as usual, with bitterest pressure upon the poor, whose scanty raiment affords but inadequate defence against the inclemency of a British sum-

mer. They get wetted through and through, and having no change of clothes, fall easy victims to the catarrh and other maladies that come in the train of hard weather. Then, again, how sad it is to think what innocent schemes of enjoyment are frustrated, and what pleasant projects of holiday-making in the country lose the name of action! It is a sight to bring a cloud upon the sunniest brow to see the rain pouring down in sheets and tons of water upon the little children in the parish vans, who for weeks past had thought all day and dreamt all night about a merry "outing" in Epping Forest, at Rye House, or on Buckhurst Hill, and whose noses are as blue as indigo, and whose teeth chatter in their heads even while they proclaim, amid diluvian drenchings, their heroic determination not to go home till morning. The "Upper Ten" partake the disasters of the million, for the glories of "Vanity Fair" have vanished from Rotten Row, and the splendor of the Park is washed out. Never more this season will the Four-in-Hand Club display their magnificent equipages to the admiration of a dazzled populace; nor, if this sort of thing goes on, is it to be expected that the Butterfly coaches to Brighton, High Wycombe, Seven Oaks, and other delightful localities, will be left much longer upon the road. It is no joke to send a splendid vehicle, a team of spanking "bloods," and a coachman and guard in dainty liveries from the White Horse Cellars in Piccadilly, on a journey of some forty or fifty miles, with no happier result than to find coach, horses, and men all soddened with rain and bespattered with mud. Look where we may, we see failure, disappointment, and vexation of spirit. The Eton and Harrow match came to grief at Lords; the "summer manœuvres," as they are

styled with grim pleasantry, will probably eventuate in rheumatism to all concerned; Wimbledon Common has been converted into a swamp, and picnics and floral *fêtes*, and garden parties of all kinds have but served to illustrate in their downfall the absurdity of human anticipations and the vanity of human desires. "Such is life, which is the end of all things!" as Mrs. Brown beautifully remarks. Unless matters meteorological mend, and that speedily, still graver calamities are in store. What is to become of the excursion season, and whither is that large section of the over-worked London public to turn for comfort, who have heretofore been accustomed to have recourse for the recruiting of their health and spirits to trips down the river or to the sea-side? A more pitiable sight can hardly be imagined than that now presented by the Thames steamers on their rainy way to Gravesend, Southend, and Sheerness. Alas, for North Woolwich! Alas, for Erith Gardens! Alas, and a-well-a-day for Rosherville, the place to spend a happy day! As for Ramsgate, Margate, and Broadstairs, the sooner their respective inhabitants throw up the sponges which they so closely resemble, the better for the Cockneys, who have enough to put up with without being befooled as well as deluged.

The sights one is doomed to witness in the streets of London during the Reign of Rain are derogatory to the dignity of human nature. It is no uncommon thing to see people of the humbler sort going about in tarpaulins, coal-sacks, horse-clothes, or blankets, "in the alarm of fear caught up." I protest that no longer ago than Wednesday last I saw a man in Bishopsgate Street with a blanket swathed around him, and I will do him the justice to say that Cæsar could not have

worn his toga with a finer air of grace and grandeur. Still, one does not like to see men going about in blankets, however elegantly they may be worn. A still more harrowing spectacle was to be viewed in the Strand on Tuesday, where—while it was raining cats and dogs, and here and there a rat—I actually saw an ironmonger's porter with an inverted coal-scuttle upon his head. Fancy man, born for immortality, going about the Strand with a coal-scuttle upon "the dome of thought, the palace of the soul!" Then, again, how sad—how very sad—it is to see human bodies clad in those clammy, glistening mackintoshes, which make a man look like a turbot! I always expect to find fins and scales growing upon a man thus piscatorially apparelled. But the most agonizing sight of all is to see a cabman with two hats on. This is a practice which ought to be put down by the strong arm of the law. How should any man dare to wear two hats in a civilized country? No one should be permitted to sport two hats unless a man with two heads. Suppose everybody were to put two hats on, what a nation of lunatics we should be accounted! A law should be passed without an hour's delay to disentitle a cabman wearing more than one hat to recover his fare under any circumstances whatsoever.

When I was a very small boy, no bigger than a decanter, it was customary for little children to sing this song in rainy weather,—"Rain! rain! go to Spain, and never come to us again!" The latter part of this supplication should be omitted, for the world may not do without rain; but the former ought now to be in common use from John o'Groat's to Land's End. Let us hope that brighter days are coming, and that, for the present, at all events, it is all over with the Reign of Rain.

THE LONDON ROW.

ON returning to town after a brief sojourn in some sequestered spot far from the maddening crowd, nothing strikes you more forcibly than the contrast between the tranquillity of the country and the pother of London. If you are, unluckily for yourself and your friends, of a poetic temperament and prone to the folly of writing original verse or parodying that of other people, it is ten to one that as you stroll from Charing Cross to Fenchurch Street you will pause pensively every now and then, and, striking an attitude at a crossing, burst forth into some such utterance as this—

> "What are the wild wheels saying,
> Rumbling the streets along,
> All my fine feelings flaying
> With their uproarious song?"

The row in the streets is something appalling, and the most exasperating thought about it is that it might be in a great measure prevented, or at all events assuaged, if we would but set about the task in a resolute manner. But we won't. Fully one-half the noises of London might be hushed; and it is not in words to express how much more comfortable and enjoyable our lives would be made in consequence. It is dreadful to think what we suffer in the course of the year by reason of the granite pavement alone. We had need to be made of the like material to endure it with impunity. The wear and tear of "tissue," as physiologists call it, to us who have hourly experience of its thundering row

and its terrific jolting, must be as injurious to health as it is ruinous to peace. It splits our ears, it shakes our bones in their sockets and our teeth in our heads, it shatters our nervous systems, and it plays the mischief with what sentimental novelists delight to call "the noblest feelings of our nature." As for conversation, in the civilized sense of the word, it is out of the question when you walk through a street paved with granite. You must bellow like Stentor if you would shout down the combined clatter of omnibuses, cabs, and vans, in what Mr. Tennyson too truly describes as "roaring Temple Bar." John Gay, apostrophizing London by the fanciful title of "Augusta," one hundred years ago, makes pointed allusion to the roughness and noisiness of her thoroughfares—

> "To pave thy streets and smooth thy broken ways,
> Earth from her womb a flinty tribute pays,
> For thee the sturdy paver thumps the ground,
> Whilst every stroke his lab'ring lungs resound."

During the century that has elapsed since the penning of those lines very little has been done to tranquillize the great metropolis. True, a few streets have been asphalted and a fewer still have been paved with wood; but stone is still the main material of pavement, and still as of yore the dismal "Ogh!" of the sturdy paver wielding his ponderous hammer—an implement that would have disgraced the middle ages—shocks our ears. Walking one Friday evening not long ago through the Strand, on my way from Trafalgar Square to Farringdon Street, I was bothered, bewildered, and distracted by such a conflict of inharmonious noises as has probably never been found upon earth elsewhere than in London since the building of the Tower of Babel. Some

maniac who died years ago—alas! that he should have ever lived—left a leg of mutton and trimmings (so the Cockneys are led to believe) to ensure the ringing of the bells of the Church of St. Martin-in-the-fields at a stated hour every Friday evening till the last syllable of recorded time. The bells were, accordingly, swinging uproarious from the church tower as I set out from Morley's Hotel; and what a fearful row they made to be sure! At the Lowther Arcade a wretched woman was grinding a barrel-organ for the torture, not only of the passers-by, but still more for that of her own child, a poor little animal about two years old, every nerve and fibre of whose tiny frame must have vibrated, and whose brain must have been well-nigh convulsed by the discord emitted from the instrument upon which it lay, poor infant, as upon a bed. At the corner of Agar Street a fellow was playing upon that newest engine of agony, the Mitrailleuse-Piano; in front of the Adelphi Theatre, three men standing in a row, were blowing brazen horns of some sort, wherewith they made the hoarsest, most discordant noise imaginable; near Somerset House, but on the opposite side of the road, a girl was playing on the cornopean; a few yards further on a fellow was filing a saw; in Essex Street there was a Punch-and-Judy show; and all this while countless vehicles were rumbling uproariously over the granite pavement. Why, it was enough to drive the Devil mad! "Coaches roll, carts shake the ground, and all the streets with passing cries resound." Have you ever stood upon the Holborn Viaduct hard by Dr. Parker his Temple of an afternoon? If not, don't. What with the roar of cab and 'bus; the heavy artillery of Pickford's and Railway vans, the vibration of the bridge; the tantalizing expression of

the figure of "Commerce," with her hands full of coins which you may not touch; and the ridiculous proceeding of Prince Albert in taking off his hat to the Viaduct as if it were a lady; there is at that particular place such a combination of horrors as you had better not encounter if you have any regard for your bodily health or your peace of mind. Nor do matters mend if you strike out of the great city arteries into the tributaries. In the City Road, the New North Road, and the whole route from Westminster to Brixton the bells of the tram-cars aggravate the noise-nuisance to an intolerable degree, to say nothing of the injury which the cars in question do to the roads, and to the "traps" of various kinds other than tram-cars plying thereon. You fly for refuge to the Railways—out of the frying-pan into the fire! The shriek of the locomotive runs through your spine like a knife; and the row the railway porters make in slamming the doors of the carriages is simply inhuman. The line being blocked, we came to a stand-still for a few minutes one day at a station on the Underground Railway. "Sir," said I, with a suavity all my own, to one of the porters, a gentleman in corduroy, who had shut the door with even more than ordinary fury, "I wish you would do your spiriting a little more gently. You frighten the life out of me. You might shut the door quite as effectually with half that noise." "Oh! my eye and my elbow!" replied that haughty young porter. "Sir," said I, with unruffled dignity, "I made no reference either to your eye or your elbow; though I should be well pleased if the former were more vigilant and the latter less vigorous; but permit me to assure you that you are more noisy than the occasion warrants. Why not imitate the motion of the spheres?" "I know

nothing about them," he rejoined. "Have you ever read Bacon's *Natural Philosophy?*" I ventured to inquire. No! not he. He had never heard of it. "Well, then," quoth I, "allow me to inform you of what Lord Bacon says on the subject of a placid demeanor: 'Great motions in nature pass without sound or noise. The heavens turn about in a most rapid motion without noise, to us perceived; though in some dreams they have been said to make an excellent music.' Now, my young friend, *do* let me implore you to emulate the gentle and melodious example of nature, and to shut the doors quietly for the future." What do you suppose was his answer? "Go! put your head in a bag!" Yes, *that* was what the haughty young porter made answer. I was very angry; and threatened to report him; but on second thoughts I won't. Instead of reporting him I will take his advice. "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*" The next time I travel from Moorgate Street to Edgware Road by rail, I *will* put my head in a bag, and I dare say I shall not suffer half so severely from the shrieking of the engine or the slamming of the door. The experiment is at all events worth making; and in the interest of humanity I will make it.

Many of the noises which were wont to invade the repose of our forefathers have vanished, only, however, to be succeeded in some cases by others of a more clamorous character. The guardians of the night no longer cry out the hour. If you were to ask a Bobby to sing forth the time o' night under your window he would probably regard you as a lunatic, and treat you accordingly. Anyhow he would not do it unless you were to make it well worth his while to comply with your request. Most of the time-honored London cries have

disappeared never to return but in their places we have noises most *un*musical, most melancholy. In summer time we have the caterwauling of "Ornaments for your fire-screen!" and in winter the woeful wail of Irishmen tearfully exclaiming "Oranges! — Orang*ees!*" than which a more execrable noise never fell upon the human tympanum. The ballad-singers have all but departed, but we are little the better for their departure, as in their room come hordes of so-called "musicians," whose blatant row is equally fatal to business and enjoyment. The man who could derive satisfaction from the grinding of an organ or the performances of a street band must know as much of music as a cow knows of playing a piano, and would probably derive pleasure from the passing of his wet fingers over a pane of glass, or the rolling of a wheel upon a dry axle, or the turning of a door upon a rusty hinge. Our fathers were free from the fell persecution of street music, but we are happily exempt from what must have been a bitter annoyance to them, the swinging to and fro of the sign-boards in front of the shops, a clamor which used to be regarded as an omen of ill weather—

> "But when the swinging signs your ears offend
> With creaking noise, then rainy floods impend,
> Soon shall the kennel swell with rapid streams
> And rush in muddy torrents to the Thames."

How dreadful must that noise of swinging signs have been on stormy nights in mid-winter, more particularly in cases where the shop-keeper had neglected to keep the sign well oiled. It turns one's teeth of an edge to think of it. But, "th' inaudible and noiseless foot of Time," as Will Shakespeare happily phrases it, has kick-

ed both the signboards of tradesmen and the snoring-boxes of watchmen into the waters of Lethe, and there is little now left to disturb the dreams of slumbering Cockneys, unless it be the mad career of the fire-engines tearing along the street at a furious pace, the white horses galloping for their dear lives, and the firemen in their brazen helmets shouting to the passengers to clear the way; a wild uproarious spectacle, yet not without a dash of the picturesque.

But if we are rather more peaceful than our sires by night, we are in no better case, but rather in much worse by day, the traffic in the streets being now much greater and far more sonorous than in their time. To say no more about stone pavement or street-music, it is really shocking to think how much noise there is that might be prevented. Why will the London boys keep everlastingly whistling? There is no city in the world where the boys in the street whistle so loudly and so badly as London. I wish they wouldn't. If they only knew what annoyance they cause me, I am sure they wouldn't. They are eternally at it, and it is not one boy in a hundred that has an ear or a lip for whistling. And the worst of it is that they all have a run upon the same tune, so that for weeks together, one hears nothing else but a barbarous outrage upon the one air—the song of the 'Gens d'armes' in *Geneviève de Brabant*, or the 'Marsellaise,' or the 'Conspirators' Chorus,' etc., as the case may be. Again I say—and let it be conclusive of the matter—I wish they wouldn't. People who deal in the liquor that passes for "milk" should learn how to pronounce the word if they won't sell the thing; and the vendors of cat's-meat, who now shout out something that makes human beings shudder, however it may please

the cats, should be made to mend their speech, and not emulate the midnight utterances of the animals to whose appetites they administer. In gentlemen's houses, conducted as they should be, and in West-end clubs of the first class, the servants tread noiselessly as though they were walking upon velvet, and do your behests most peacefully, but in private houses of inferior "ton," and in the generality of taverns and coffee houses, the servants knock about the china and glass as though they were skittles, and appear to think that work is inseparable from row. Nor is it domestics only who offend against the peace which should prevail in good society. What can be more unbecoming than the strife of tongues at a dinner table, as though each guest were seeking to talk down the other. Table-talk should run in a bright, smooth, silvery current, not in a foaming, boisterous tide. Then, again, there are people who, whether in public or in private, appear to regard their noses as trumpets, and play upon them accordingly. This is intolerable. How dare any man to pull out his pocket-handkerchief like a banner, and use it with such uproar that I start affrighted from my seat, and fancy that Prince Bismarck has landed with an invading army, and is summoning me to surrender? How dare any man, I repeat, thus to terrify and torture me? I was reading a day or two ago in the British Museum. You might have heard a feather drop, so profound was the silence, when suddenly the man next me played a solo upon his nose, which rang through the dome for all the world like the flourish of a bugle. "Sir," said I to the performer, "you appear to be a military man. Is *that* the 'Assembly?' Or is it the 'Retreat?' What *are* we to do?" "Thunder and turf, sir," quoth he "I suppose a man may blow his

nose without asking your permission." "Of a certainty," I replied, "but no one has a right to make his nose an instrument of torture to his fellow-creatures." He seemed to be of a different opinion, so there the conversation dropped, for I hate to argue with any man. Only I thought to myself how very wise those Spanish innkeepers were who in the olden time used to make "ruido" an item in their bills, charging their guests for the noise they made. How welcome, how blessedly welcome is night when, to quote the words of a sublime poet,

> "Silence like a poultice comes
> To heal the wounds of sound."

Revolving the matter in the innermost recesses of my mind, and bringing to the consideration of it all the thought and research at my command, I have arrived at the conclusion that mothers are answerable for not a little of the unnecessary noises which so fatally disturb the repose and impair the dignity of human life. Long before a child reaches that mysterious age when it begins to "take notice," it is supplied with artificial and altogether superfluous appliances for kicking up a row. It has first a rattle, then a squeaking little trumpet, then a drum, as though to teach it from the earliest dawn of life that the end and aim of human existence is the making a noise in the world. "I have seen a monkey," says Dean Swift, "overthrow all the dishes and plates in a kitchen, merely for the pleasure of seeing them tumble, and hearing the clatter they made in their fall." That is all well enough for a monkey; but, surely, man born of woman should know better. I protest that if I were a mother I would as soon think of giving my baby a loaded revolver as a coral and bells. When the streets

are paved with wood, when no other than anthracite coal consuming its own smoke, is burnt in the grates, when nose-trumpets are forbidden by law, when whistling boys are birched, when the Thames is embanked with silent highways from Chelsea to Millwall, and from Battersea to Greenwich, and when mothers perceive the wisdom of inculcating in their offspring the grand lesson of making as little noise as they possibly can in the course of their earthly career, then, and not till then, will the London Row disappear, and London become a pleasant place to live in.

POST YULE-TIDE MEDITATIONS.

WELL, Christmas is over; the year is no longer very new; the yule-log is fairly burnt out; the sounds of festivity have died away; we are tossed no more upon a sea of revelry; we have got at last into quiet waters. It is a pleasant thought. Christmas comes but once a year; and "a good job too." Life is at best a sad experiment, clouded with care and full of trouble, even under the most favorable conditions of fortune; but only fancy what it would be if Christmas were to come once a week! To live in a perpetual whirl of dissipation; to be doomed to the perennial consumption of roast turkeys and plum pudding; to be compelled all the year round to eat and drink three times as much as is good for you; to be trotted out from one theatre to another; to wear a cast-iron smile, it matters not what sorrow may be rankling at your heart; to kiss

and be kissed everlastingly under the mistletoe; and to have to wish everybody you meet "the compliments of the season," whatever on earth that may mean, to have to do and suffer all these and many other things of kindred absurdity without intermission, from one end of the year to the other, were such a destiny that life would not be worth having upon the terms. It maddens one to think of it. It is as though a man should be married anew regularly every morning. For my own poor part I would rather be Othello's toad, living upon the vapor of a dungeon, where at all events there is peace, than a man dwelling in perpetual commotion under a Yule-tide, which, like the great Pontic sea, should know no retiring ebb. Indeed, dear reader mine, I will take thee into my confidence, and, borrowing a favorite phrase of Lord Clarendon in his much be-praised and very heavy book "The History of the Great Rebellion," I will "let myself loose to say" that, viewed only in its social aspects, and without reference to its purely religious signification, which, though undoubtedly most consolatory, is too often eclipsed by the carnalities of the celebration, Christmas is but a melancholy time for people who have any faculty of thought, and have passed the age of five-and-twenty. Truly for them its mirth is very tragical. It is all very well for children who know not what care means, to whom "to-morrow" is a Canaan flowing with milk and honey; whose spirits are unclouded by the shadows of coming sorrows; whose palates are unpalled; and whose digestion is unimpaired. Let them gather the rose-buds while they may, which is not for long; let them laugh and gambol, be glad and rejoice. If they are not happy now, when may they hope to be so! Ah! when indeed. Who could find it in his heart to quell their delight, or

"to stop *their* tide of laughter with a sigh?" Leave them at the high top-gallant of their mirth, and say not a word to damp the ardor of their joy. But really when we are arrived at that most irrational of all epochs, "years of discretion;" when we have lived to know what life truly is, how mournful, how precarious; when our hearts are full of sad memories, and dark forebodings, how dismal *then* is the very thought of jollity, and with what a mocking echo do the sounds of conventional merriment fall upon the ear! Christmas comes round again, and we are told to be jolly. The streets swarm with elated citizens, laboriously intent on pleasure; the shops are decked out in finery; the bells are ringing, and the busy note of preparation resounds through the land; everywhere people are preparing to put on happiness like clothes: but another year is gone, gone past recall, and we sigh to think what havoc death has committed since this time twelvemonth; what gaps he has made in the circle of our friends; what loved ones he has slain; what homes he has destroyed; what hearts he has made cold and desolate. How many were there among us bright and joyous last Christmas, whom we shall never see again?

> "When I remember all
> The friends so linked together,
> I've seen around me fall
> Like leaves in wintry weather,
> I feel like one who treads alone
> Some banquet hall deserted,
> Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead,
> And all save me departed."

Trite lines, but how true! We are reminded of that ghastly German story about the band of students who

swore to dine together and drink one another's healths every Christmas-eve ; how exuberant was their mirth at first, but how it got clouded as years rolled on ; how every year saw a seat emptied and the company growing thinner, till there was but one old man left to drink to his own health in a mirror ; and how he at last was found lying cold and stark by the side of his chair. But independently of the tragic vicissitudes to which, from the very conditions of humanity we are all of us subject, and which give a melancholy aspect to the recurrence of any anniversary, however festive in itself, there are circumstances, both social and climatic, which makes Christmas here in London anything rather than a season of enjoyment. It is a period fraught with calamity. The papers teem with accidents and offenses. "News" means the intelligence of shipwrecks, colliery explosions, railway collisions, marriages and other disasters, the mere recital whereof is almost enough to make one's blood run cold. Winter is ever rife with misfortunes—and with crime as well. Witness the awful record of misdeeds chronicled in every journal. While plum-puddings are smoking upon every board and the loving-cup goes round, garotters are being flogged and murderers are being hanged in batches of three or four at a time. So much for the social aspect of Christmas in modern times. Nor are we more fortunate in matters meteorological.

The Christmas season may now be divided into four chapters, entitled respectively Fog, Fat, Frost and Thaw. There was a time when November was supposed to be, and was, in fact, the foggiest of all the months in the year; but to that proud distinction it may no longer lay claim. November now-a-days is often a very

enjoyable month—hardly less so than October, so dear to artists for its cold, gray days. November is keen, bluff, and stormy, but it is not unfrequently dry, clear and bracing. The palm of fogginess in climate now belongs as indisputably to December as does that of fogginess in meaning to Mr. Browning. We all remember the dreadful fog in December, 1873, which was continued from day to day for the best part of a week, like some appalling story in "The Penny Awful." The December fog, in fact, is the most ominous harbinger of Christmas, and it is hardly possible to imagine anything in the way of atmospheric visitations more horrible or more depressing. Even Mr. Kingsley, who alone of all men living or dead, has sung the praises of the "East Wind," could hardly find it in his conscience to say a word in favor of the December fog, which envelopes you as with a wet sheet, chokes you as with a filthy duster, and bothers and bewilders you out of your seven senses. It wraps up the sun in a mustard poultice, it takes the azure out of the sky and substitutes pea-soup, and enshrouds the world in clammy yellow vapors, which not only forbid all enjoyment of nature, but do the gravest injury to our health. Not to ours alone, for even the prize cattle at Islington succumb to their dreadful influence. Scarcely have we emerged from the fogs when we find ourselves in "The Festival of Fat." Of all celebrations ever witnessed in a civilized country assuredly this is the most astounding. Generations, as yet unborn, will read with amazement the accounts of their fathers' proceedings in the matter, "and wonder what old world such sights could see." We sneer at the ancient Egyptians for worshipping an ox, yet all London, and all the country as well, throng in myriads

to the Agricultural Hall to gaze in idolatrous admiration upon a fat bull, or a still fatter pig. Why this apotheosis of obese swine? and whereof all this mighty ado about an adiposity, which, as in man so in the lower animals, simply betokens disease? These greasy quadrupeds who can hardly waddle, and who can with difficulty see out of their eyes, so fat are they, are merely suffering under a degeneration of tissue which renders them as useless as uncomely. Not only are they unfit for any farming or agricultural purpose during their lifetime, but they will have no posthumous value in the sense of food for the human beings, of intelligence inferior to their own, who view them with wonder and affection. Oxen and pigs who are mountains of fat will never make good beef or pork. They are in that sense worthless, as they are in all senses ugly, but still, as Christmas approaches, people lose their wits about this pitiful exhibition, and multitudes of all classes and conditions, as well princes of the blood as "costers" from Whitechapel, all rush with equal eagerness to take part in the Festival of Fat. A prize-fight was in reality a much nobler spectacle. But we are too refined for pugilism, and the lower orders, discarding the use of their fists, have taken to kicking like horses, though in a far more brutal fashion. To the Festival of Fat succeeds a more brilliant and delightful celebration—the Festival of Frost. But that it causes such suffering to the poor, and is so hurtful to the health of invalids, Frost might be welcomed with universal satisfaction, for it is marvellously beautiful and exceedingly favorable to manly sports and pastimes. Of the beauty and brilliancy of frost, they who dwell with trees around them as I have the happiness to do, and they alone, can

form the faintest idea. Those of my friends whose sad fate it is to look through their upper windows, back and front, upon a wilderness of chimney-pots vomiting forth coils of filthy smoke, have about as much notion of the grace and splendor of frost-work as a man blind from birth has of the prismatic glories of the rainbow. It is nothing to the purpose to say that at half-a-mile's distance there may be a park where the trees are glistening in sunshine and rime. As well might a poor man seek to cull comfort in his poverty from the thought that a rich man may be living next door to him. If the park, however near, be not within view, it does no more good to you while you are at home than if it were a hundred miles away. It is just the difference between the town and the country. I prefer the country, but "every man to his taste," as the farmer touchingly remarked when he kissed his cow instead of his wife. While I marvel at the "taste" of those who would prefer a chimney-pot to a tree, quite as much as at that farmer who would rather kiss a cow than a woman, I freely admit that every man's house is his castle, and far be it from me to disenchant him with his dwelling. Yet my friends who, as Tom Hood phrases, it delight to feast upon an "endless meal of brick and mortar," and who, therefore, know nothing about the effulgence of the frost—for who ever heard of the play of sun-beams through the frost-crystals of a chimney-pot?—may take my word for it that the most poetic imagination can hardly picture to itself anything more magnificent than the form and expression of the trees during the frosty weather this Christmas. But the frosts in this island are but sorry affairs compared with those recorded not alone by Baron Munchausen, but by that still more

veracious historian Bishop Wilkins, who gravely assures us of the existence of "a cold country where discourse doth freeze in the air all winter and may be heard in the summer or at a great thaw." What a comfort it would be to be sure, if some folk's words would hang concreted midway in the air, even as they were being uttered, and what a still greater blessing if Spring revolving would but leave them there. The saddest thing about a frost is that it must of necessity be followed by a thaw, of all operations of external nature assuredly the most dismal and disheartening. There is no wittier simile in Shakespeare than that which he puts into the mouth of the jester—"I was the prince's jester, and duller than a great thaw!" He must have been dull, indeed. A thaw suggests to a fanciful mind the idea that nature was drunk, or, as the slang phrase goes, "tight," over-night, and is going through the wretched discipline of getting sober. In a great city the spectacle is unspeakably miserable. Everything is so grim and slobbery. The street is like a turnip-field; the footpaths are slimy and full of slush; the eaves of the houses are "like Niobe, all tears;" the sky resembles a vast dome of wet sponge; the earth is like wet mortar; it looks as though the whole world were falling to pieces. It speaks well for the innate geniality and good-humor of Falstaff that he could preserve his good spirits, pass his joke and quaff his sack, notwithstanding that he was, as he himself assures us, "subject to heat as butter, a man of continual dissolution and *thaw;*" but it is not easy to understand how a person of Hamlet's refined taste and exalted imagination could have desired that "his too, too solid flesh would melt, *thaw*, and resolve itself into a dew." Had his as-

pirations been realized he would probably have found himself in no very comfortable condition. Yet a "thaw," as taken to symbolize the softening of an obdurate nature, has a potent plenitude of meaning; and the song of the poor maniac to his mistress is not without a certain touch of fantastic pathos—

> "I'll weave thee a garland of straw, my love,
> And I'll marry thee with a rush ring,
> And thine icy heart shalt thaw, my love,
> So merrily shall we sing."

If so she was no strong-minded woman. Cæsar was of sterner stuff—

> "Think not that Cæsar bears such rebel blood
> That will be *thawed* from the true quality
> With that which melteth fools."

And what a splendid metaphor is that of Dryden's, where he describes one of his heroes as being clad in

> "Burnished steel that cast a glare
> From far, and seemed to *thaw* the freezing air."

But let the poets say what they may about a thaw, it is, of all things under the sun, the dreariest and most uncomfortable. It is bad enough in the streets, where it soaks you through and through, and causes you to tumble about in all directions; but it is still worse when it invades your home, and making your pipes to burst, places you at the mercy of that most unconscionable of tyrants, the plumber. When that dreadful man once crosses your threshold with his infernal soldering pots, and sets about pulling your house to pieces, shaking his head oracularly, peering down your cistern, squinting

up your pipes, and telling you what a providential thing it is he has come in the nick of time, for that otherwise you would have been swept into the next parish by the rising floods—farewell to warmth and cleanliness, a long farewell to decency and comfort. The various phases of Fog, Fat, Frost and Thaw have been distinctively marked this Christmas. We who still survive have passed through them all triumphantly. We have feasted and made merry, we have quaffed our ale or wine as the case may have been, we have cut deep into our plum-puddings, we have given innumerable geese and turkeys cause to regret that they ever were born, we have had our fill of good old British roystering. The holidays are over, and right glad am I to think that we have got once more into quiet waters.

THE USES OF SYMPATHY.

SYMPATHY is precisely that one touch of nature which, as Shakespeare matchlessly phrases it, "makes the whole world kin." All that is most lovable and endearing, most refined and exalted in humanity, owes its origin to the impulses of that celestial instinct which prompts us to feel for others' woe. It is the quintessence of honor; it is the soul of heroism. What leads the forlorn hope in battle?—what sends the hero of the fire brigade up blazing piles and through sheets of flame?—what mans the lifeboat amid raging waves and howling winds?—what makes women, young, lovely, and highborn, exchange the gilded saloons of fashion for

the field of slaughter, "where rings the loud musket and flashes the sword?"—what urges men who, without reproach, might dwell at home at ease, to go forth with their lives in their hands to the deserts of Africa and the snow-fields of the Arctic regions in search of lost explorers?—what should it be but sympathy? This it is, and this alone that steels men and women of the noblest types to look death fearlessly in the face so that it may be said of them in aftertime that they died in a good cause—the best of all causes, the rescue of their fellow-creatures. "There never was any heart truly great and generous," writes Dr. South, "that was not also tender and compassionate. It is this noble quality that makes all men to be of one kind; for every man would be a distinct species to himself were there no sympathy among individuals." Truthful as potent is the saying of Philip Massinger—

> "The eye that will not weep another's sorrow
> Should boast no gentler brightness than the glare
> That reddens in the eye-balls of the wolf."

Softer and more melodious in expression, and equally true in sentiment, is Byron's verse—

> "What gem hath dropped and sparkles o'er his chain?
> The tear, most sacred, shed for other's pain,
> That starts at once bright pure from pity's mine
> Already polished by the hand divine."

Very lovely too is Keats' definition of sympathy —the exquisite faculty that teaches us to share "the inward fragrance of each other's hearts." Indeed, it is not too much to say that a man is moraliy precious in the exact proportion that he is discerningly sympathetic. Measured by this standard, some men who have

long passed for giants would be reduced to dwarfish proportions. Take for example Dr. Samuel Johnson, formerly of Bolt Court, Fleet Street, in the City of London. Few men enjoy to this day a higher renown as a moralist than he ; but what is that morality worth which is not instinct with kindness? Johnson made every now and then a mighty parade of his good nature, and there is no denying that he was occasionally capable of deeds of ostentatious benevolence ; but the general bearishness of his conduct and his systematic disregard of the feelings of others forbid the thought that he was, *au fond*, genuinely and thoroughly sympathetic. What an insight into his hard insensate character do we obtain from the following figment of a conversation between him and his idolatrous biographer whom he took such delight in snubbing!

"Boswell: Suppose, sir, that one of your intimate friends were apprehended for an offence for which he might be hanged. Johnson: I should do what I could to bail him and give him any other assistance, but if he were once fairly hanged I should not suffer. Boswell: Would you eat your dinner that day, sir. Johnson: Yes, sir, and eat it as if he were eating with me!"

A Pagan philosopher in the darkest ages of Heathenism would have been ashamed to say so. To understand the height, depth and breadth of Johnson's selfishness as revealed in his own confession, we must bear in mind that he lived in an age when capital punishment by no means implied, as of necessity, heinous guilt in the offender. It was not, as in our times, murderers alone who were brought to the gallows. A man of many good qualities, who would shudder at the thought of blood, might be hanged, and as a matter of historic fact,

was frequently so disposed of, who in the desperation of poverty had committed no worse offense than burglary to the value of a shilling, or having ridden off upon a neighbor's horse without that neighbor's leave. Nay, there are cases in the books of men having been delivered over to the executioner for offenses for which a brief imprisonment would now be deemed sufficient expiation. Such was the state of the law in the days of Dr. Johnson, who, making high pretension to philanthropy, did not scruple to assert that if one of his *intimate* friends were "once fairly hanged," he, the said Johnson, would eat his dinner on the day of the execution as if he were eating it in company with the very friend who had come to so horrible a death! So much for the sympathetic element in one whom posterity is wont to regard with peculiar veneration! But that sort of talk was quite of a piece with Samuel's ordinary conversation. "Sir," said he, on another occasion, to his Toady, "it is affectation to pretend to feel the distress of others as much as they do themselves. It is equally so as if one should pretend to feel as much pain while a friend's leg is *cutting off* as he does"—a remark of which all that we need say is that its humanity is on a par with its grammar. From the coarse cynicism of Johnson to the joyous philosophy of Falstaff how delightful is the transition! It is as though one should be magically wafted from the London fog to the sunny orange-groves of Algeria. Sympathy, as interpreted by the fat knight, meant fellow-feeling, whether in weal or in woe—brotherhood of sentiment as well in joy as in sorrow. What can be more eloquent than Jack's definition? "You are not young; no more am I. Go to, then! There's sympathy. You are merry, so am I.

Ha! ha! Then there's more sympathy; you love sack, so do I; would you desire better sympathy?" Certainly not. Jack, my boy, thou art indeed the heart's-blood of a good fellow, and the world is indebted to thee for more happiness than it will ever derive from Sam Johnson, for all his learning and pomposity.

And as sympathy is the highest endowment of Nature so also is it the finest achievement of art. Orators, poets, painters, sculptors, actors, are great in their respective callings in the precise proportion of their ability to touch the tender chord of sympathy in the human heart. The amount of their success in this regard is the exact measure of their skill. There are speakers who, as the French are wont felicitously to express it, "*ont des larmes dans la voix*," have tears in their voices; and magical indeed is the effect of their utterances. It is not so much what they say, as their manner of saying it, that awakens the sensibilities of their hearers. The "sanctimonious rhetoric" of Mr. Gladstone, as Mr. Disraeli once happily described it, falls mellifluously upon the ear, but rarely reaches the heart; nor indeed is Mr. Disraeli himself much more fortunate in this respect, for brilliant as he is in debate, and poignant in repartee, he is singularly deficient in tender emotion. There is but little of pathetic sentiment in anything that usually falls from the lips of Mr. Bright. Yet is his voice of a *timbre* so musical, manly, and sympathetic, that the most commonplace matter spoken by him would acquire a certain tragic significance in the delivery. His voice is in itself eloquence, and that too of a very refined order, for he modulates it with the utmost delicacy. Among by-gone orators I should imagine that Burke, Erskine, and Curran, were probably

the greatest masters of pathos. They belong to an era which is not likely to be paralleled in coming time, for our age is utilitarian and money-searching in a sense hardly consistent with picturesque and impassioned speech. Oratory, rare in the pulpit, has all but vanished from the bar, and is now seldom heard even in what was once its peculiar domain—the legislative councils of the nation. We have but few native painters whose genius can be said to be sympathetic. Mr. Poole and Mr. Faed have the gift, though in senses as different as their styles are dissimilar. Madame Henrietta Browne is richly endowed in this regard; still more so is Mr. Israels, who of all Continental artists is probably the most powerful in his appeal to the sympathies of the spectator. Two pictures of his I especially remember as works not to be viewed without emotion. The one entitled "The Flitting," represents a poor widow by whose side toddle her two fatherless little children, while she is herself pushing before her, through a desolate landscape, a little cart containing her few "sticks" of furniture, late on a cold autumnal evening, while the trees shiver in the bleak blast, and the rain-fraught sky looks dreary and disconsolate, and the dusk is quickly thickening into dark. The other simply reveals the interior of a peasant's cottage, where a mother and her son are saying grace with a guileless expression of profound devotion before partaking of their dinner, which consists of a dish of potatoes and one solitary herring. Their pious resignation in the midst of poverty, which is not abject only because no adversity encountered in such a spirit can be so described, is a sermon in colors, and may well wring the hearts of the selfish and luxurious. The sympathetic element in poetry is its most

essential constituent. Without it there were no poetry worthy of the name. The dying speech of Hamlet to Horatio brings the tragedy to a tearful conclusion :— "If ever thou didst hold me in thy heart, absent thee from felicity awhile, and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain to tell my story." As uttered by a melodious and sympathetic voice there is nothing in Shakespeare more touching than these words. I remember to have read in a country churchyard an epitaph which he who has ever lost a child under the like circumstance will probably appreciate in the plenitude of its pathetic beauty. It ran thus :—

"Sacred to the sweet memory of Mary ——, who died in her 18th year.

> "Thine only fault, what travell'rs give the moon,
> Thy light was lovely, but—it died too soon."

Shenstone's exquisite Latin epitaph on a young girl who perished in her prime has never been surpassed, perhaps never equalled,. "*Eheu! quam minus est cum aliis versari quam tui meminisse!*" Gray's "Elegy," and Wolfe's "Burial of Sir John Moore," are alike immortal in right of their resistless appeals to the sympathy of the reader. Very sweet and tender, too, are these lines of Gerald Griffin on the death of his sweetheart :—

> "The tie is broke, my Irish girl,
> Which bound me here to thee,
> My heart has lost its only pearl,
> And thine at last is free!
> Dead as the turf that wraps thy clay!
> Dead as the stone above thee!
> Cold as this heart which breaks to say
> It never more can love thee!

The calm pure eloquence and sublime simplicity of these lines are beyond all praise. But of all artists the actor exercises the most powerful sway over the sympathies of humanity. True, his triumphs are short-lived as instantaneous, but they are superb, enchanting. Mr. Justice Talfourd has a charming passage upon this subject:—

"Surely no career is more apparently joyous, more crowded with pleasure, and more abundant in rewards than that of a successful actor. Nor is his art, when honorably pursued, wanting in dignity. He is not a mere reciter of the poet's language, for his greatest successes often occur when the words are few and unimportant, and when he has no prompter inferior to nature. It is nothing to detect shades of tenderness and thought—streaks and veins of fancy, as a painter discovers graces in the landscape unheeded by others? Is it nothing to bid a crowded theatre feel those touches of nature which make the whole world kin; to break the crust of self-love which encircles the worldling's heart and compel it to feel for others; to afford some hint to the rude clown of the heroism and the suffering of which his nature is capable, and to impart the first mild touch of sympathy and thought to the child? These surely are triumphs worth achieving; if they are short in duration they are proportionately intense, and are in truth the more genial as they partake of the fragility which belongs to all the pride and glory of human life."

Happily for the world, sympathy is of no particular class, creed, or country,—it is common to them all. Who has not some times missed it where he had the best right to expect it? Who has not sometimes found it where he had the least reason to look for it? I have

received it with equal liberality from foreigners and my own countrymen—plenteously at the hands of Christians, and quite as abundantly at those of a Hebrew family accomplished as benevolent. It is the sweetest solace of life, and without it life were little worth.

THE DELIGHTS OF MUSIC.

IF there is in this turbulent little planet of ours one thing thoroughly delightful, altogether enjoyable, it is assuredly music. Talk of the world without the sun! The world without the gamut were quite as intolerable. The alliance between the heart of man and the concord of sweet sounds is mystical as subtle. For every phase of human feeling, for every mode of human thought, there is a correspondent symphony. If a man be in a merry mood, music will enhance the brilliancy and effervescence of his mirth; if he be sorrowful, music will either dispel his anguish or shed around him a sentiment of luxurious sadness more acceptable than the most uproarious merriment; if he would taste the pleasures of the festive board, music will make him Anacreontic; if he would be devout, music will develop all that is reverential in his nature and waft him to the seventh heaven. "The meaning of song goes deep," says Mr. Carlyle. "Who is there that in logical words can express the effect music has on us?—a kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infinite and lets us for moments gaze into *that*"—

"Music! oh, how faint, how weak,
Language fades before thy spell;
Why should feeling ever speak,
When thou canst breathe her soul so well?
Friendship's balmy words may feign—
Love's are even more false than they;
Oh! 'tis only music's strain
Can sweetly soothe and not betray."

A germ of profound philosophy lurks in each conceit of the Hellenic mythology; and the surrender of Eurydice by the Powers of Darkness, who were unable to resist the melodies of Orpheus, is an illustration potent as picturesque of the dominion of music even over natures the most rugged and rancorous. The most brilliant of essayists is thoughtful, and witty as usual, in descanting on this subject. "It cost Timotheus, I dare say, a great deal of fine playing to throw the soul of Alexander into a tumult of feeling; but that once accomplished the bard harped him into any passion he pleased. However this be true of Timotheus and Alexander, it is certainly true of music in general. If we are stupid or indolent we resist its powers for some time; but when the twangings and the beatings and the breathings once reach the heart and set it moving with all its streams of life, the mind bounds from grief to joy, from joy to grief, without effort or pang, but seems rather to derive its keenest pleasures from the quick vicissitudes of passion to which it is exposed. It is the same with acting. It is difficult to rouse the mind from an ordinary state to a dramatic state; but that once done we glide with ease from any passion to its opposite. See the effect of a long piece of music at a public concert. The orchestra are breathless with attention, jumping into major and minor keys, executing fugues, and fiddling

with the most ecstatic precision. In the midst of all this wonderful science the audience are gaping, lolling, talking, staring about, and half devoured with *ennui.* On a sudden there springs up a lively little air, expressive of some natural feeling, though in point of science not worth a halfpenny,—the audience all spring up, every head nods, every foot beats time, and every heart also ; a universal smile breaks out on every face, the carriage is not ordered, and every one agrees that music is the most delightful rational entertainment that the human mind can possibly enjoy."

In discoursing upon the genius and works of Mendelssohn, a learned critic observes that the 'Songs Without Words,' which are amongst the most popular parlor-music in the world, "had their origin in the habitual necessity for musical expression in place of verbal. The apparent anomaly involved in their title ceases when it is remembered that these charming wordless lyrics were really the native language of the composer, and that he is in them as truly descriptive, thoughtful, impassioned, or even satirical, as if he had held the pen of Barry Cornwall or Heinrich Heine." For my own part, I have as little sympathy as admiration for the man who is insensible to the charms of music, and unable to interpret its utterances. I would not make a friend of such a man. I would not trust him with change for half-a-crown. I believe that such a man could find it in his heart to rob a mouse of the bit of toasted cheese in its trap. As for marrying a woman without musical taste and talent, I declare to you I had as soon go about with a hedgehog under my waistcoat. Such persons are flinty-hearted, insensate, and hardly deserve to be accounted human. No man nor woman either who did

not admire music and respond to its eloquent appeals was ever yet in love. "How silver sweet sound lovers' tongues by night, like softened music to attending ears!" If you doubt it go down to Rosherville one of these lovely autumnal nights. What time the south wind sighs aromatically over the gardens, and the lady moon sails queen-like through the sable sky, hearken to the echoes of tinkling laughter and romantic vows issuing from the myrtle-groves; and placing your hand upon your heart, while you raise your hat reverentially, deny, *if you dare*, that any such delightful melody ever before fell upon your ravished ears! and as music is the delight of courtship, so also it is the happiest privilege of matrimony. It is charming in every sense of the word to see married couples get on "harmoniously" together. I am not myself a husband, but I know a man who is, and he assures me that on returning to his villa at Norwood, after a hard day's work in the City, it is sufficient compensation for all his toil and trouble to find the beloved partner of his joys and sorrows seated at a piano (purchased on the three years' system) and singing "Home, Sweet Home," in accents so sonorous that they are distinctly audible on the other side of the road. One evening last week he was so entranced with the dear old ballad that he could not for the life of him summon courage to knock at his own door, so he sat down upon a grassy bank opposite, exclaiming with Shakespeare :—

> "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
> Here will I sit, and let the sounds of music
> Creep in my ears; soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony."

It was not until his wife had given over singing that he could be induced to cross his own threshold

and clasp her in his arms. Have you ever observed what an atmosphere of melody seems to dwell around some people! how musically they speak as well as sing; what a "sweet" smile plays around their lips, and what music breathes from their faces? There is a tender cadence to every word they speak or write. It has a dying fall. Their pens are as melodious as their tongues. They are, generally speaking, very good people who write and talk thus.

Variety in music, as in most things else, is desirable; but variety must not be carried too far. One of the officials in the Bethnal Green Workhouse is a very zealot, and did a wonderful thing the other day. He encouraged three blind fiddlers to play as many distinct tunes at the same time, while he sang a song which was unconnected with any one of them. This proceeding, though not in strict accordance with the rules of harmony, had at least the merit of originality, and I cannot help thinking that the guardians acted rather harshly in dismissing from his place an officer guilty of no worse offence. On the other hand there is no denying that music should be both taught and practised upon sound principles. In this, as in many other respects, we owe a vast deal to our street musicians—dear fellows! Indeed it may well be doubted whether there is any class of men to whom the British public are so largely indebted for the means of intellectual enjoyment, furnished, be it remembered under circumstances of peculiar danger and difficulty.

These gallant troubadours, who, coming here foot-sore and travel-stained from far-distant lands, take up their positions in our most swarming thoroughfares, and there, heedless of the multitudinous noises and defiant

of the roaring traffic around them, play "The Last Rose of Summer," "My Jane, my Jane, my Pretty Jane," to the accompaniment of myriads of wheels, are very Palladins of their art and deserve to be ranked among the greatest benefactors of the human race. To see a troubadour of this class lugging about an organ almost as heavy as a mangle on a burning day in mid-summer, limping from one door to another, and grinding and grinning simultaneously, sweet pet, as he limps; to see such a sight as that is to witness as heroic a spectacle as the ages of chivalry could exhibit. And what, both at home and abroad, is the reward of these devoted minstrels? In the streets of Rome I have seen an ungrateful populace turn upon them with wolfish rage and fling their organs into the Tiber; in the streets of London I have seen them—alas the day!—"run in" by remorseless bobbies at the point of the truncheon and treated with the utmost contumely. Yet these and such as these are the men who come here to humanize and refine us; to indoctrinate us in an exquisite art; to shed melody upon our fog, and to enliven and diversify the clamorous operations of our commerce with such strains of music as never entered into the contemplation of Mozart or Beethoven. Nor is this devotion in our cause limited to the ruder sex. How often do we see a lovely woman playing the trombone or cornopean on the kerb-stone in Oxford Street, Holborn, or the Strand. A more touching or more beautiful sight is not to be imagined. The performance is such as may be best relished by a blind man with wool in his ears. It is very certain that the education of the British Public is sadly defective in all that relates to the delights of music. In this regard we are badly off, though by no means so badly as were

our ancestors. Sir John Hawkins gives a melancholy view of the opportunities furnished to the middle and lower classes of society in the latter part of the seventeenth century for the study and enjoyment of music. The nobility, of course, had private concerts of paid performers, as, to a certain extent, they had probably always been accustomed to. Then for classes lower in position we find a kind of public concert gradually growing into use, of which the chief manager was Mr. John Banister, but as to the people generally, it seems the major part of them were satisfied with entertainments given at public-houses and by performers hired by the landlords. He says, "There was no variety of parts, no commixture of different instruments; half-a-dozen fiddlers would scrape "St. Leger's Round," or "John, come kiss me," or "Old Simon, the King," with divisions, till themselves or their audience were tired; after which, as many players on the hautboy would, in most harsh and discordant tones, grate forth "Green Sleeves," "Yellow Stockings," "Gillian of Croydon," or some such common dance tune, and people thought it fair music; but a great reformation was at hand, though everybody was astonished at the quarter from which it came." Mr. Charles Knight tells us all about it. "There was then to be seen walking through the streets of London a man distinguished from his rivals in the same trade—that of selling small coal from a bag carried over his shoulder—by his peculiar musical cry, by his habit of stopping at every book-stall that lay in his way, where, if there happened to be a treasure, it was sure to be caught up and purchased; and by his acquaintances, many of whom as they paused to speak to him in the street, were evidently members of a very

different rank of society to his own. Ask any bystander you see gazing upon him with a look of mingled wonder and respect, who or what he is, and you are answered 'that he is the small coal-man who is a lover of learning, a performer of music, and a companion for gentlemen any day of his life. It was, indeed, Thomas Britton, the founder of popular concerts. Let us follow him home to his little coal-shed and house cheerily as he goes, where all traces of the business of the day soon disappear. An hour or two elapses, and he is in the midst of a delightful circle of friends and fellow amateurs exchanging sincere congratulations, paying his respects to new visitors, opening music books, and tuning his violin. These harmonious meetings, which began in 1678, appear to have continued until the death of Britton, which, it is painful to add, occurred through them. A certain Justice Robe was among the members, one of the vilest of social nuisances—a practical joker. This man introduced into Britton's company a ventriloquist named Honeyman, who, making his voice descend apparently from on high, announced to Britton his approaching decease, and bade him on his knees repeat the Lord's Prayer by way of preparation. The command was obeyed, and a few days afterwards the subject of it was lying a corpse, overcome by the terrors of the imagination thus recklessly and basely worked upon." Yet cruel as was his end, he has left behind him a name that "smells sweet and blossoms in the dust," for he was the pioneer of a great movement, and posterity must ever be his debtor for his noble though simple efforts to bring the delights of music within the reach of the people.

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO.

THE immortal maxim of the ancient naturalists—"*Omne vivum ex ovo*," everything living sprang first from an egg—has its parallel precept in the moral world, and that precept may be thus defined — all sociable and political ethics are referable to the same grand source — Cock-a-doodle-doo. As surely as you may trace the lineage of the oak to the acorn, so surely may you trace the fine springs of action in all departments of human enterprise to the same origin—Cock-a-doodle-doo. Resolve philosophy to its elements ; analyze heroism ; reduce to their constituents the most romantic feats of chivalry and the most intrepid exploits of adventure, and what do they all come to? Cock-a-doodle-doo. Whether among communities or individuals the same assertion holds good. The mystical and irrepressible delight that we find in crowing over one another was at the bottom of every war that has desolated the earth, and of every quarrel that has set friends by the ears from the dawn of creation to this day. Men and women have been described as "unfeathered and biped." Yet have they wings, which to flap defiantly in one another's faces, to the jubilant chorus of "Cock-a-doodle-doo," is simply the sweetest pleasure and the loftiest pride of which humanity is capable. Nations go to war for an idea—and what is that idea? Cock-a-doodle-doo. France wanted to have the crow over Germany, and to that end plunged into a conflict the most fatally disastrous in the whole history of the Gallic race.

There was a mighty "crow" over Saarbrück, but a still mightier over Sedan, only there the wrong bird was singing; the tables were turned and the Teutonic cock had the crowing all to himself. Well, Germany compelled her foe to bite the dust, in fact took all the "crow" out of her, and, not content with such bitter terms, seems resolved never again to allow her to wake the welkin with her clarion note. Poor France! What *is* to become of her? A "crow" is the dear delight of her heart, yet never again must she presume to indulge in the priceless luxury. Let her not attempt it, for no sooner shall she have expanded her wings and opened her beak than Prince Bismarck and General Von Moltke will be down upon her in fell swoop and compel her to "shut up" or "hold her row," as Mr. Brown is wont ungallantly to phrase it when attempting to reduce Mrs. Brown to silence. There was a time when we English were as good "crowers" as any on earth. Those were the good old days of prize-fighting and eke cock-fighting, when three bottles of old port was the regulation allowance for each guest at a dinner party; when it was an article of popular belief never to be called in question that one Englishman could lick any three foreigners, and when Lord Nelson laid it down as an indisputable maxim of logic that the only way for a Briton to argue with a Frenchman was to knock him down. It was a sweet thing in "crows," then, to boast that the sun never sets upon our empire—and, indeed, considering how seldom he rises upon our metropolis, the least he can do is to give us some compensation in the matter of setting, or rather of not doing so. Alas! the pity of it, but those also were the days when Britannia ruled the waves (though not very straightly), and when Britons

swore a deep oath never to be slaves. The bondsman setting foot upon our shores found his limbs growing mysteriously too large for his gyves, which, accordingly, were wont to burst asunder, leaving him as free as mountain-breezes. We no longer talk in that exalted strain. We brag no more about our national glory; but, intent on money-making, and on that alone, leave the game of "crowing" to poorer nations.

A wedding is a "crow"—a splendid "crow"—for the bride. As for the bridegroom, the less he says about it the better. His days of jubilation are over, unless, indeed, he be like Mr. Selby in *Sir Charles Grandison*, who, though vanquished every day by his wife, "still went on crowing with undaunted vigor." But the triumph of the bride is great, indeed, and greater now than at any former period of our history; for, if it is true, as statisticians assure us, that there are at present in England many hundred thousands of women, who, though marriageable, are unappropriated, how delightful must be the sensations of the woman who secures a husband while such myriads of her sisters fail to get one for love or money! That is indeed, a "crow" worthy of the name. So, too, is a birth; for Smollett observes with happy wit that when that event occurs in a family, there is not a woman in the house who does not look three inches taller in consequence. Here, again, the advantage is, as usual, with the ladies. It is all very well for the mother. She is entitled, sweet pet, to her maternal "crow," and much good may it do her!—but the father is simply an object of ridicule, in everybody's way, and a nuisance to the household. The whist-table is a fine arena for crowing. Unless, indeed, the regular gamblers who play "high," and go in for large stakes, no one

would care to join in a rubber but for the crow of it. It is such a glorious thing to throw the ace of trumps upon your adversary's king, or to win the odd trick by any means just as the opposite party were gloating over the thought that the prize was theirs. Depend upon it the charm of the game dwells not in the winnings, which are a matter of trivial consideration, but rather in the crowing which brings with it a delightful sensation. And so, indeed, it is in every kind of competition. What is it that gives zest and true enjoyment to the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race; to the Derby and the Ascot; to the cricket-matches between Eton and Harrow; to the lunatic proceedings of the "Spelling Bee"? It is nothing more nor less than Cock-a-doodle-doo. The country is far more favorable than the town to the comfortable and frequent enjoyment of "crowing;" for Mrs. Grundy lives almost exclusively in the country, there inculcating that meddlesome interference with other people's affairs which supplies perpetual opportunities for a "crow." In a village every new bonnet is a "crow" for the wearer; but no great mischief is done, for the girl who is crowed at to-day knows that next Sunday it will be her turn to crow.

"Crowing," therefore, is not without its pleasant uses. While kept strictly within the bounds of good taste and good feeling, it is in truth one of the means and appliances of happiness. It is only when it is suffered to transgress those limits that it degenerates into ill-nature and becomes odious. There is a kind of "crow" which is little less than fiendish in its malignity—that comprised in the reproachful and triumphant exclamation, "I told you so!"

"Of all the horrid hideous notes of woe,
Sadder than owl-songs or the midnight blast,
Is that portentous phrase, 'I told you so,'
Uttered by friends, those prophets of the past
Who, 'stead of saying what you now should do,
Own they foresaw that you would fall at last,
And solace your slight lapse 'gainst *bonos mores*
With a long memorandum of old stories."

Of this, rest confidently assured that the man who, in the hour of your defeat and mortification, would taunt you with the good advice he gave, and you discarded, chuckles in his sleeve at your disaster and finds in a spiteful "crow" at your expense ample compensation for any inconvenience your misfortune may have caused him. It was a lad of that ungracious type, take my word for it, who, when trouble had befallen his father and mother, instead of sympathizing with them as a good son would have done, crowed after this insolent fashion:—

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!
Mother's lost her shoe,
Father's lost his fiddle-stick
And doesn't know what to do,
Sing Cock-a-doodle doo!

The boy who could express himself thus unfeelingly had in all probability purloined both the shoe and the fiddlestick, and did not care a straw what inconvenience his parents might be put to in consequence. And to think what a vile ignoble creature man is! and what a seraphic being is woman! It is an every-day occurrence to hear husbands say to their wives, "I told you so;" but who in this world ever yet heard a wife address her husband in any such terms? There is not one solitary

instance upon record of a wife having ever spoken these words or any similar ones to her spouse. And yet there are brutes who would not give women votes! Why, it is only women who should be allowed to vote. Then, again, there are dunces whose joy knows no bounds if they can only catch you tripping in a quotation. True, they are themselves the merest smatterers. You may have read, from cover to cover, more books than they ever heard the names of; and it is like enough that the particular passage in which you are at fault is the only one in the language that they know correctly. They may have picked it out of a dictionary of quotations, or it may have served them in childhood for a copy-slip. These considerations might teach them modesty. If they were really erudite they would be generous, remembering that "what is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always present; that sudden fits of inadvertency will surprise vigilance, slight avocations will seduce attention, and casual eclipses of the mind will darken learning: and that the writer shall often in pain trace his memory at the moment of need, for that which yesterday he knew with intuitive readiness, and which will come uncalled into his thoughts to-morrow." But considerations such as these are beyond the appreciation of the shallow. They cannot afford to be generous. So, by all means let them have their little "crow." Compliment them on their erudition, and express your profound admiration of the splendor and variety of their genius. That is the only way to be even with such small deer.

THE COMFORT OF BEING DOWN IN YOUR LUCK.

IT is no uncommon habit with men who, as the phrase goes, "have not succeeded in life" to cherish a morbid sentiment of *pitié de soi*, as though they were the martyrs of a destiny exceptionally severe. This opinion involves a delusion egotistical as irreverent. It is egotistical as arrogating for the man who holds it undue importance in the economy of nature that he should be deemed worthy of such penal distinction; it is irreverent as ascribing to Providence the cruelty and injustice of marking out particular individuals of the human race for a rigor of treatment amounting to persecution. A fallacy lies at the bottom of the whole conception, the fallacy of supposing that no penalties, but privileges and prerogatives alone are attached to greatness. The heathen philosophers fell into no such error. They reminded the world that the Angel of death knocks with impartial foot at the palaces of kings and the cottages of poor men; and they depicted the warrior in the proudest hour of his triumph as riding jubilantly along, with Care seated behind his saddle. A dispassionate view of mundane affairs must conduct us to the conclusion that while the opportunities of happiness are distributed equably throughout all classes of the community, they are but a handful of people to whose lot fall the gifts of Fortune. Here too the Ancients were wiser than are many of our Christian sages. It was a proverbial saying among the Romans—

"*Non cuivis contingit adire Corinthum*"—it is not every one who can get to Corinth; and the liability of the good and patient to have their wealth and honor wrested from them by others has been nowhere illustrated more ingeniously than in the melodious verses of Virgil, "*Sic vos non vobis*," etc. Felicity is independent of rank and affluence, and is often found in highest perfection where these are not; but "success" in the worldly sense of the word is rare indeed:—

> "Order was Heaven's first law, and, this confest,
> Some are and must be greater than the rest,
> More rich, more wise, but who infers from hence
> That such are happier shocks all common sense."

He who, overlooking this great truth, broods darkly over his own disasters, while men of inferior worth are wealthy and eminent, will do well to bear in mind that failure to attain not alone fame and fortune, but even a competency is the inevitable lot of the overwhelming majority of mankind. No man—being nothing more than man—ever concentrated in his own person the sorrows and disappointments of the human race. Myriads of the noblest men and women who ever adorned humanity have had to struggle hopelessly with misfortune from the cradle to the grave, and have passed away leaving no more memorial than if they had never existed. They were good and gifted—rich in mental as in moral attributes of choicest excellence,—but though their friends may dwell lovingly on their memories, the world knows them not and never knew them. Men and women of much smaller desert are remembered; but *they* are never named. To make the amount of a man's success the measure of his merit is a

vulgar error, and worthy of the vulgar, since nothing can be more irrational. "A great battle is gained," writes a thoughtful author, "the plan and dispositions of which are admirable; the general who conducted the army is considered as a consummate master of the military art, and arrives at the very summit of reputation as an accomplished officer; but this plan of the battle was drawn out for him the evening before by one of his aides-de-camp, whose original conception it was, and to whom the merit is really due." Which is the more enviable situation? His who is praised without being worthy, or his who is praiseworthy without being praised? Nobody, surely, can entertain a moment's doubt about the matter that the praiseworthiness is preferable to the praise. In this sense spake Addison in that oft-quoted but little heeded passage, "'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it." Byron, in a vein of bitter irony, changed the reading thus, "But do you more, Sempronius, *don't* deserve it; and never fear that you will have the less." Very possibly you may have all the more; for who does not know that here below the "race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong." One Cæsar lives, a thousand are forgotten. It is in the very nature of things that it should be so. Some needs must lose that some may win the race. Hamlet had a pathetic visitation of this thought when in the plenitude of his anguish and distraction he exclaimed—

> "Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
> The heart ungalled play;
> For some must watch while some must sleep,
> So runs the world away!"

Yet we continually hear some man or another say in despairing accents, "Ah! it is just like my luck." True, it may be just like *his* luck, but it is also every bit as like the luck of countless millions of the human family; for failure is the rule, success the exception all the world over. Indeed nothing can more distinctly proclaim a degenerate nature than the propensity to value a man, not by his intrinsic qualities, but rather by the glittering accidents of fortune which often befall the most worthless, leaving the truly meritorious without guerdon or reward.

> "A knave's a knave to me in every state,
> Alike my scorn if he succeed or fail,
> Sporus at court or Japhet in a jail."

"If we should fail!" suggested the conscience-stricken Macbeth. "We fail!" echoed tauntingly his remorseless wife. "But screw your courage to the sticking-point, and we'll *not* fail!" Just so; but courage in a bad cause is villany; and success won by such means, what is it else than infamy? It happens not unfrequently that good men prosper, and their prosperity gives joy to the generous and right-minded, be their own condition what it may; but really, when we look around us and see how often it occurs that men of little worth flourish luxuriantly, while the virtuous are doomed to perpetual penury, we may well pause ere we envy the successful or contemn the unfortunate. "I confess," says an excellent writer, "that increasing years bring with them an increasing respect for men who do not succeed in life, as those words are commonly used. Ill success sometimes arises from a conscience too sensitive, a taste too fastidious, a self-forgetfulness too romantic, a modesty too retiring. I will not go so far

as to say with a living poet that the world knows nothing of its greatest men, but there are forms of greatness, or at least of excellence, which die and make no sign; there are martyrs that miss the palm but not the stake, heroes without the laurel, and conquerors without the triumph." This fine thought may well give spirit to the afflicted and comfort to the unlucky. What can be more consolatory to such people than to know that many of the best and most brilliant fellows who ever existed were doomed to vexation and disappointment all the days of their lives. Nothing can be more absurd than that a man should be miserable merely because he is down in his luck. That, on the contrary, is the very reason why he should be light-hearted, for any change in his destiny must be for the better. If he were in prosperous circumstances he might well dread the morrow, not knowing what calamitous vicissitudes it might bring with it; but being in adversity, he may cherish the hope that the next revolution of the wheel of Fortune may whisk him out of the sandy desert into a land overflowing with milk and honey. "*Qui sedet in terra non habet unde cadat*,"—"he who is content to sit upon the ground need not fear a fall." Consider, moreover, the mental serenity enjoyed by a fellow who is perennially down in his luck. "What is glory? what is gain? Heavier toil; superior pain." But this toil and this pain touch not the man who is systematically unlucky. He has missed the splendors of success, but with the splendors the solicitudes also. Stocks may rise and fall; banks may fail; the rate of discount may be raised to a ruinous figure; the markets may be at famine prices —what need he care? He has known the worst, and may laugh in the face of Fortune. He need never dread

bad news, nor tremble at the knock of a dun. Where's the use of dunning a fellow who is down in his luck? Samson was a strong man, and Solomon was a wise man, but neither the strength of Samson nor the wisdom of Solomon could get money out of a man who has none. Such a man may sing before a highwayman, and, should he be visited by burglars, he may break a jest with them on the folly of their seeking in his house at night for the property he himself cannot find there in the daytime. It is only the man down in his luck who can taste the ineffable pleasure of Hope. It is when our fortunes are at their very lowest ebb that Hope speaks in most seraphic accents. Nothing in the conduct of Madame Bazaine was more worthy of admiration than her reply to Marshal MacMahon, when, being supplicated for a remission of Bazaine's sentence, he said he could give no hope. "I do not ask you, sir, for hope," said the dauntless wife. "It is not yours to give or to deny. Hope is in the gift of God alone, and He gives it to all His creatures." The man who has been down in his luck, and he alone, can estimate this noble utterance at its true value. Moreover, the man who is down in his luck may defy the shafts of envy. Nobody ever envied a fellow who is down in his luck, and *that* I hold to be an immense advantage, for envy is composed of hatred in the proportion of nine parts out of ten, and who can endure the thought of being hated? Better to be loved in a shabby hat and threadbare coat than hated in purple and fine linen. A certain air of ridicule surrounds the man who is down in his luck, and *that* is in itself an element of happiness. I know of nothing more exquisitely enjoyable than that a man should find in himself a never-failing source of derision. I do not

mean to say that my lot has been exceptionally severe, or severe beyond my demerits; but this I do say—I have had my share of sorrow. Enough said! It may be that these perishing lines shall find their way into the hands of some other fellow who is down in his luck. If so, I would say to him, "Be of good heart, brother! Never give up! It will be all the same in a hundred years. Take counsel with thyself, thy Maker, and the Angel Death. Cometh the day and cometh it quickly when sorrow and solicitude, malice and ingratitude, shall have no more power to wring our hearts. Soundly shall we sleep where the willows are waving." "*Hic vera quies, hic meta laboris.*"

THE THISTLES OF LITERATURE.

IT occurred to me the other day to make a cruise among my books in search of what Dryden calls "the sweet civilities of life," that I might filch some of them for presentation to my friends. The result was a deplorable failure. I am like the sheep who went for wool and came home shorn. Heaven forefend that I should address any friend of mine or even foe in the language of the great! The laurel of immortality is after all in the gift of the unlettered million. They it is who assign to every man the measure of his renown, and award to each the precise position in the temple of fame to which his merits entitle him. It is well that it should be so, for if the world's magnates were allowed to write each other's epitaphs, tombstones would tell

anything rather than flattering tales. Your great men have spoken all manner of unhandsome things one of the other ; and if it were but possible to collect in one volume all that they have said in each other's defamation, it would be as strange a book as ever was printed. This internecine hostility among the great is not a thing of yesterday. It has been so in all ages, and it will probably so continue till the last syllable of recorded time. In the classic days of yore Homer had his Zoilus, Philip his Demades, Cæsar his Catullus, and the Gods themselves their Momus. Scaliger called Lucian the "Cerberus of the Muses," and Lactantius and Theodoret denounced Socrates as a "fool." But this is going too far into the shadowy realms of antiquity. Let us come nearer home and see whether we cannot cull a choice bouquet from the mutual compliments of men who have lived within the range of modern history.

Bishop Warburton was undoubtedly a man of bold, fertile, and vigorous genius. His powers of application were marvellous ; and, like a true Hannibal, there was no mountain of toil that he could not soften and disintegrate with the vinegar of his perseverance. But he was haughty, passionate, and vindictive ; prejudice had narrowed his extensive views, acrimony had soured his temper, and party spirit had repressed his imagination. His fame is associated most intimately in the estimation of posterity with his "Divine Legation"—a masterly work, through every page of which his genius shines (to use the words of an eloquent critic) "like the rich sunshine of an Italian landscape." His object was to trace the mission of Moses to a divine origin, and thus, of course, to vindicate the elementary principles of the

great Christian system. It was a noble task, and had he displayed a Christian spirit while engaged in it, our admiration would have been complete. But, alas! he did not. He was insolent, overbearing, despotic, and presented to the world as humiliating a spectacle as can be well imagined—that of a man, who, while professing to act as the champion of Christianity, was prepared upon any or no provocation to assail his fellow-creatures with a ferocity of invective that would have disgraced a Pagan. Mallet called him "the most impudent man living" (which he never could have been during Mallet's lifetime), and Churchill has denounced his arrogance in lines written rather with vitriol than ink :—

> "He is so proud that should he meet
> The twelve Apostles in the street,
> He'd turn his nose up at them all
> And shove St. Peter from the wall."

Bishop Lowth was a profound and elegant scholar and a discriminative critic. He had no unkind feeling towards any human being, but in his "Prelections" he advanced a doctrine respecting the Book of Job, which Warburton considered as aimed at his own peculiar opinions. In vain did Lowth disclaim any such application. Warburton's wrath was unappeasable, and mark how he speaks of that critic, who, perhaps, of all then alive, had the most sensitive literary palate. "Lowth," he says, "can't distinguish partridge from horse-flesh—I shall hang him and his fellows as they do vermin in a warren, and leave them to posterity to stink and blacken in the wind." Lowth was as gentle as he was gifted, but this was a little too much for his philosophy, so he took up his pen and in a manly and spirited letter

denounced Warburton "as a quack in commentatorship and a mountebank in criticism." Like Cato to Carthage, the Bishop of Gloucester returned to the charge, and poisoned his pen with such verdigris as this: "Though your teeth are short, what you want in length you have in venom, and know as all other creatures do where your strength lies." And so the battle waxed fiercer and fiercer, Lowth protesting with earnest dignity against the treatment he was receiving, and Warburton repelling his protestations with contempt and insolence. It was thus that he treated all who presumed to differ from him on any point, however trivial. "The Divine Legation" concluded, he applied himself to an edition of Shakespeare, which remains to our time an astonishing monument of perverted ingenuity and abused erudition. Plain words are subtilized to the most remote conceits, and the simplest and most natural allusions of the great dramatist are made the vehicles of the most unheard of allegories. Such a work of course provoked criticism, and Dr. Johnson among others ventured to express disapproval; but the bishop pooh-poohed all objections, and consigned to infamy all objectors. "Of this Johnson," he said contemptuously, in writing to Dr. Hurd, "you and I, I believe, think alike." Dr. Gray's preface to *Hudibras*, a clever and scholarly production, he described as "an execrable heap of nonsense." Rousseau he stigmatized as a "madman," qualifying the phrase, however, by the strange prefix "seraphic," and Hyde he dismissed as a fellow who was "at the head of a rabble of lying orientalists." But the most fiery phial of his indignation was reserved for the learned and pious Dr. Stubbing, whom he politely designated as one—

"Ungrateful to the generous man he grew by,
A brazen, brainless, bloodless, bankrupt booby."

Pope and Warburton were intimate friends, and it is to be feared that the poet's temper gained nothing in sweetness from the connection. Cumberland has said that "an author must not be thin-skinned, but shelled like a rhinoceros;"—a fine sentiment truly for one whose own exquisite sensitiveness, as portrayed by Sheridan in "Sir Fretful Plagiary," now constitutes his chief claim to immortality. Pope had certainly but little of the rhinoceros about him. He always had as many quarrels on his hands as with all his fertility of invective he could conveniently manage. And, indeed, it must be admitted that he received no ordinary provocation. Even Warburton, who was afterwards his constant associate, ridiculed him at first for the "poverty of his genius!" and "every hound," says the elder Disraeli, "yelped in the halloo against his 'Homer.'" The mutual proximity of men of genius seems to produce a familiarity which excites hatred or contempt, while he who is affected with disordered passions imagines that he is establishing his own claims to genius by denying those of others. Lord Hervey, of Ickleworth, has been celebrated by Middleton as one who was remarkable for his good sense, his rigid temperance, his sterling patriotism, and his consummate politeness. But Pope fell foul of him—probably for no better reason than that he was the supporter of Sir Robert Walpole—and, oh! what a portrait of him has he transmitted to posterity.

Never was there distilled such venom from the English language as in drawing the character of Sporus. It is the concentrated essence of sublimated spite:—

"Let Sporus tremble! What! that thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curds of ass's milk.
Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings—.
This painted child of dirt that stinks and stings."

But it is unnecessary to quote the whole passage, for no doubt it is burnt with a pen of caustic into the memory of the reader. Colley Cibber was another writer of that day whose shadow had the misfortune to cross the path of Pope, who accordingly denounced him as a creature "with less human genius than God gives an ape." This was a savage sarcasm, but it had one defect—it was not true. Cibber was a man of brilliant talents, and we cannot but admire the calm dignity of his manly reply:—"Sir, satire without truth recoils upon its author, and must at other times render him suspected of prejudice even when he may be just." Had he said everything with equal temper, he would have deserved our utmost sympathy; but his philosophy was not proof against such sore temptations, and he grew at last as vituperative as his assailant. We may imagine how the poet must have writhed in his arm-chair when his old servant, John Searl, entered the breakfast-room at Twickenham, and handed him a letter from Cibber, commencing thus:—"Everybody tells me that for a twelvemonth together I have made you feel as uneasy as a rat in a hot kettle." But Pope was the quarry of mightier hunters than Colley Cibber. Addison was the most illustrious of his enemies—Addison, whom Pope has held up to posterity as one who could

"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault and hesitate dislike.

* * * *

Alike reserved to blame or to commend
A timorous foe and a suspicious friend."

All that is mean, unmanly, and contemptible is comprised in such a character, and of the two it would, perhaps, be better for a man to be Sporus than Atticus. Addison was the aggressor, for he had talked of the "Homer" as an "ill-executed thing," and had calumniated Pope to Lady Stuart Wortley Montague. But it sometimes happened that the poet gave the first offense. He certainly did so in the case of Leonard Walsted. Walsted was a man of elegant manners, fine fancy, and patrician family, and it is probable that his most familiar beverage was burgundy or tokay. But he wrote a poem, "Aqunippa," which Pope "misliked;" and mark how he invokes him:—"Flow, Walsted, flow, like thine inspirer, *beer*." Towards the close of his life defamers crowded round the bard. The great Mr. Dennis denounced his "Rape of the Lock" as "a mass of clotted nonsense." Mallet being asked if anything new had happened, replied that he had "looked over a thing called an 'Essay on Man,' but discovering an utter want of skill and knowledge in the author, he had thrown it aside;" and to fill to overflowing the cup of his bitterness, the contemptible little bookseller, Mr. Curll, had the effrontery to assert at the bar of the House of Lords, that though Mr. Pope had "a knack of versifying, he (Mr. Curll) thought himself more than a match for him in prose." It would have been well had Pope's quarrels ended with his life; but alas! it was not so. His foes dishonored him even in his grave, and there is nothing in the history of literature more melancholy or more humiliating than Lord Bolingbroke's posthumous quarrel with the man who had celebrated him in immor-

tal verse as his "guide, philosopher and friend." It seems as though Genius, which awakens the admiration of men in the aggregate, has in it something that evokes in an inveterate degree the hostility of the individual man. Of this we have—to quote one case from a multitude—a striking illustration in the torrent of abuse that was poured upon the scholars and philosophers who founded the Royal Society. Charles II. laughed in their faces even when he handed them their charter; and their telescopes and optical instruments were ridiculed as engines of Popery. The Mud-fog Association was not more unmercifully quizzed. Stubbs denounced it as a "Hospital of Fools," and, admitting that he was no great scholar himself, addressed its members as St. Francis saluted his only companions in the wilderness: "*Salvete fratres asini, salvete fratres lupi*"—"Hail, brother jackasses, hail brother wolves." At a later period a still more implacable enemy arose in the person of Sir John Hill, who, having been rejected because of his waspish temper by all the learned societies in succession, ridiculed them all with equal asperity. The Antiquarians were "medal scrapers" and "antediluvian knife-grinders;" the Conchologists were "cockle-shell merchants;" the Naturalists were "pedlars of prickle-backs and cock-chafers." Hill was a man of varied talents—there is no denying it—and of miraculous industry. His "Vegetable System," extending to twenty-six folios, and containing 16,000 plates, representing 26,000 different figures from nature, is in itself a pyramid of his industry; yet it does not comprise one-twentieth part of his labors. He wrote travels and histories, romances, sermons, pamphlets, plays, and poems; in fact, he put his pen to every kind of writing, though

it is not quite so certain that he beautified all that he touched. His temper was intolerable, his vanity egregious, and in every fellow-creature he seems to have found an enemy. "Friendship passed him like a ship at sea." Fielding, punning on his name, called him "a paltry dung-hill;" and Smart, whom he had called an "ass," devoted a long poem to him, "The Hilliard," in which he denounced him as

> "A wretch devoid of use of sense and grace,
> The insolvent tenant of encumbered space."

Garrick's happy lines on his double faculty of physician and playwright are well known :—

> "For physic and farces his equal there scarce is,
> His farce is a physic, his physic a farce is."

Some other wit, whom he had stigmatized as "a wooden-headed booby" assailed him in a similar manner:—

> "The worse that we wish thee for all thy vile crimes
> Is to take thine own physic and read thine own rhymes."

Nor did it end here. Malice, like echo, caught up the perishing strain, and the last epigram was the best of the three—

> "No! let the order be reversed,
> Or he'll not rue his crimes,
> For if he takes his physic first
> He'll never read his rhymes."

A neat epigram, and poignant as any in the language! The famous controversy between Boyle and Bentley about Æsop's fables and the epistles of Phalaris illustrates very remarkably the willingness of great men to

defame one another. To hear them talk you would really imagine that, instead of being scholars and gentlemen, they were idiots and cut-throats. We find Boyle calling Bentley "a dunce and a jackass," while Bentley compares Boyle with his new readings to "a bungling tinker mending old kettles." Then came the conflict between Bentley and Bishop Hare respecting the metre of Terence, a dispute which gave rise to the severe rebuke of Sir Isaac Newton that "two dignified divines, instead of minding their duties, had fallen out about a play-book." Yet Newton was no such philosopher when there was question of his own feelings, for so intolerant was he of criticism that Whiston assures us that the reason why he did not publish his commentary on the 'Chronology' during the lifetime of Sir Isaac was that "I knew his temper so well that I should have expected a hostile review would have killed him." And so, perhaps, it would if it had been written in the ferocious strain in which great men are wont to speak one of another. Parnassus, when the Parnassians fall out, is your true Billingsgate. Parker, Bishop of Oxford, described Marvell, the friend and associate of Milton, as "a vagabond, ragged, hungry poetaster, beaten in every tavern—a drunken merry-andrew." Milton himself did not come off much better, for Waller, the poet, sneered at him as a "blind old school-master" whose 'Paradise Lost' had no merit "unless its extraordinary length be accounted as such." And Spratt, Bishop of Rochester, had such an antipathy to him that he ordered his name to be erased from Phillips' epitaph "as a pollution to a Christian church." Davenant was hunted into his grave by the wits of his time. Burnet called Dryden "a monster of immodesty and impurity."

Anthony Wood described the great John Locke as a man "who could only distinguish himself by prating and being troublesome." Luther called Henry VIII. a "pig, an ass, a dunghill, the spawn of an adder, a basilisk, a lying buffoon dressed in a king's robes, and a mad fool with a frothy mouth!" and even said to him, "you lie, you stupid and sacreligious king." Madame de Staël said of the famous Thomas Hobbes that he was "a slave and an atheist." Bishop Fell described the same philosopher as "that most vain and waspish animal of Malmesbury," and Dr. Wallis could afford him no more complimentary designation than that of a man who was "always writing what was answered before he had written." Lord Chesterfield called Dr. Samuel Johnson a "Hottentot." Dr. Adam Smith described the same Dr. Samuel Johnson as "a brute." Dr. Samuel Johnson replied that Dr. Adam Smith was "a liar," and Dr. Adam Smith rejoined by tracing Dr. Samuel Johnson's genealogy to Hecuba—as the Queen of Troy is known to us *subsequently* to her transformation. And there are the idols of posterity—the heirs of immortality, "the lamps, the stars, the magnets of our lives." Smollett paid a delicate compliment to Admiral Knowles. "He is an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge, an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity." Swift talks of Walpole as "a contemptible boor," and hints with unmistakable distinctness that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward. Voltaire, in his letters from England, testifies to the prevalence of a similar opinion. "So violent did I find parties in London that I was assured by several that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward, and Mr. Pope a fool." Some sweet compliments passed

between Dennis and Sir Richard Steele. After taunting him with the atrocious offence of being an Irishman, Dennis says of Steele that he is marked "like Cain," and that his Hibernian origin is "stamped upon his face, his writings, his actions, his passions, and, above all, his vanity." Steele replied that his assailant had an "ugly vinegar face" and "duck-legs made for carrying burdens," and that "he never let the sun into his garret for fear he should bring a bailiff along with him." Macklin called Garrick a "sheer impostor," and Quin, who could not endure that such a wrong should be done even to a rival, retorted that "villain" was written on every feature of Macklin's face. George III. had the meanest possible opinion of Chatham and Temple, and did not hesitate to express his aversion. "I cannot get rid of the scoundrels," he exclaimed; "and I do not consider myself a King while I am in their hands." Very touching and affectionate was what Queen Caroline said of her own child, the Prince of Wales. "I regard him," observed this exemplary mother, "as the greatest ass, the greatest liar, the greatest *canaille*, and the greatest beast in the world, and I heartily wish he was out of it." Poor wretch, he did not long encumber the earth, for he took an eternal adieu of it in 1751. Chesterfield would not allow that Fox had "the least notion of or regard for the public good." Posterity is not altogether of the same opinion, but one "great" man must have his fling at another. Sir William Temple sneered at Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood as "a thing which sense can hardly allow." Lord Bacon rejected Galileo's discoveries with scorn. Dr. Kenrick said of Goldsmith's 'Traveller' that it was a "flimsy poem," and of 'The

Deserted Village' that it had "neither fancy, dignity, genius, nor fire." The same spirit has survived to modern times. Mr. Carlyle politely assures us that Ignatius Loyola was "a ferocious human pig." Mr. Thackeray, who had an amiable weakness for digging people out of their graves and hanging them in chains, and who should have had few frailties of his own, so merciless was he to those of his fellow-creatures whether they were alive or dead, described Pope as "a pert, prurient little bard," and Swift "as a wretched worn-out scamp—a poor stricken wretch." Nor was he more gracious to John Wilkes. Dr. Alexander Chalmers assures us that Mr. Wilkes was "a gentleman of elegant manners, of fine tastes, and of pleasing conversation." Mr. Thackeray described him as a "blasphemous cock-eyed demagogue." Dr. Gilbert Stuart hallooed Dr. Henry through the world as "an ass and an idiot" (what would your great men do when talking of one another but for that word "ass"?), and Southey could not afford to designate Napoleon otherwise than as the "bloody Corsican." Nor was the French Cæsar more just, for he sneered at Wellington as "a Sepoy Captain." Byron called Landor "a gander," Southey "an incarnate lie," Wordsworth "a footman," and Shakespeare himself "a humbug." But in this last instance, he did but steal the thunder of Voltaire, who characterized the King of dramatists as "a buffoon and a barbarian."

Such is the tone in which great men have spoken of one another, and well, indeed, may we exclaim "*Tantæ ne animis cœlestibus iræ!*"—"Can heavenly minds such high resentment show?"

THINGS THAT HAVE GONE OUT.

FASHION is the veriest chamelon, exercising over our "habits," both sartorial and social, a sway so arbitrary and capricious as to defy all calculation. In customs, as in costumes, her empire is absolute, and the wisest among us have no alternative but to submit. So true is the old saying that one may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion. It is wonderful to think how rapidly the kaleidoscope of public taste changes. Things come in only to go out. We have ourselves our exits and our entrances, so also have our "institutions" and observances theirs. That which is "ton" to-day may be "bad form" to-morrow, and every new-fangled device, whether of dress or ceremony, which now beguiles our fancy, to the exclusion of momentous matters, is but, "the perfume and suppliance of a minute." The wind passeth over it, and it is gone. We need not go back to remote days for illustrations of the mutability of manners and the evanescence of practices which were once held in the highest esteem. Everything has its day of bright glory, succeeded by a night of dark oblivion. This being so, it may not be uninteresting to take a retrospective glance, whether actual or ideal, at a few of those fashions which, though they enjoy great popularity at a date within easy range of memory, have either already disappeared, or are passing rapidly into disuse.

What has become of the Snuff-takers? Like the

Quakers, they grow fewer and fewer each succeeding year, and the day may not be distant when both the Friends and the Snuffers shall have altogether vanished. Horace Smith is very severe on the subject of pulverized tobacco. "Snuff," he says, "is dirt thrust up the nostrils with a pig-like snort, as at a sternutatory which is not to be sneezed at. The moment he has thus defeated his own object, the snuff-taker becomes the slave of a habit which literally brings his nose to the grindstone; his Ormskirk has seized him as St. Dunstan did the Devil, and if the red-hot pincers could occasionally start up from the midst of the rappee, few persons would regret their embracing the proboscis of the offender." Lord Stanhope has calculated very exactly that in forty years, two entire years of the snuff-taker's life will have been devoted to tickling his nose and two more to the delightful process of blowing it, with other incidental circumstances. "Well would it be," he adds philosophically, "if we bestow half the time in making ourselves agreeable that we waste in rendering ourselves offensive to our friends. Society takes its revenge by deciding that no man would thrust dirt into his head, if he had got anything else in it." This is very savagely said, and the sarcasm is, as the French would phrase it, *sanglant*, but the satire wants the poignancy of truth, seeing that many men of high intellect and profound scholarship have been addicted to the ungraceful habit which the satirist denounces with such severity. The reign of snuff was long and brilliant. It was probably at its zenith in the picturesque days of powder and patches, when every fop in Covent Garden was, like Sir Plume, "of amber snuff-box justly vain, and the nice conduct of a clouded cane."

Amber snuff-boxes and clouded canes in our age would be regarded as archæological curiosities, for which virtuosos would vie emulously at Christie and Manson's. The style of costume had, no doubt, a sensible influence upon the personal habits of the wearers; and a snuff-box, whether of amber or studded with brilliants, "went well," as the ladies say, with the general *tenue* of a man of fashion, a-blaze with jewelry, and clad in satin small-clothes, a coat of embroidered velvet, and ruffles of Mechlin lace. All his chattels and accessories were objects of watchful observation to his attendants, and Dean Swift, in his Advice to Servants,' did not fail to give sage counsel, which was doubtless occasionally turned to good account:—"If a gentleman leaveth a snuff-box on the table and goeth away, lock it up at once as part of your vails." Gorgeous "*tabatiéres*" went out with effulgent apparel; and when men took to broad-cloth, their snuff-boxes partook the sombre hues of their garments. Now and then, indeed, a man of costly tastes would sport a gold or silver box, and proffer it courteously for a "pinch," to a stranger, a practice which broke the ice between them, and was an easy prelude to familiar discourse. Napoleon was an inveterate snuffer, and the habit had another royal votary in the person of Queen Charlotte, who was won't to use a tiny golden bellows wherewith to blow the snuff up the nostrils,—a contrivance less graceful than ingenious. It is to be regretted that her snuffy majesty had not sufficient interest in fairyland to have secured the services of those dainty sprites whose achievements have been celebrated so melodiously by Pope, in *The Rape of the Lock*:—

"Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw
The gnomes direct, to every atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust."

It is worthy of remark that in proportion as the use of tobacco in the form of smoking has increased with us, it appears to have diminished in the shape of snuffing. The few snuffers who remain carefully eschew the sorts of "dust" which were in general favor some years ago, such as Scotch rappee and Irish "blackguard," going in only for those moist "messy" powders which have at least the negative advantage of not setting the people in the vicinity of the snuffer a-sneezing, as was customary when the dry snuffs were in vogue. But the days of snuffers, whether dry or moist, are numbered. Even the Scotch Highlander, with snuff-horn in hand, now seldom stand in mimic guard at the shops of tobacconists; and at no distant date a snuff-box will probably be as great a rarity as a pair of snuffers. And by the way that calls to mind that there is another kind of snuffing which has quite gone out—candle-snuffing. Its disappearance is to be regretted only because it has put an end to a venerable old riddle,—What snuff is that of which the more you take the more will be left in the box? Candle-snuff to be sure.

How seldom now-a-days one meets a man with a wig! There was a time within the memory of people not yet old, when men in affluent circumstances no sooner found their hair getting thin on the top than they hied them as a matter of course to the perruquier and ordered a wig, or if not that, a scalp. The practice was one of respectable antiquity, and was favored in bygone ages by canine as well as human heads, as appears clearly enough

from the sublime poem commemorative of the affectionate proceedings of Old Mother Hubbard in respect of her dog. Do we not read that

> "She went to the barber's to buy him a wig,
> And when she came back he was dancing a jig?"

Whether he put the wig on or not is a matter on which the poet has not vouchsafed to enlighten us, but in all probability he did. Be that as it may, wigs have now fallen into utter disesteem, both with dogs and their masters. The habit of wearing false hair appears to have grown odious to men, though not so to women, who never before used it to such an extent as at present You might walk from Putney to Poplar and back again without seeing a male head surmounted with an artificial coiffure. In fact, we men are now in pretty much the same condition as the wigless pig whom an anonymous traveller famed in nursery legend encountered on his way to Stonor,—

> "Upon my word of honor,
> As I was going to Stonor,
> I met a pig without a wig,—
> Upon my word of honor!"

One cannot help wondering that a gentleman, doubtless of unsullied reputation, should have deemed it necessary to pledge his honor twice so vehemently in authentication of so exceedingly credible a statement. Were he now alive, he would find as many unwigged men as pigs at Stonor, and indeed anywhere else in England, for the matter of that. Official wigs survive now upon the Bench and at the Bar, and there alone, unless, indeed, we take into account the wigged coachmen whom

one comes across now and then in Hyde Park or Regent Street during the London season.

Formerly, the Bishops used to wear wigs, and a pleasant joke upon the subject is preserved in the amber of Curran's wit. "Is there anything strange in this wig of mine, Mr. Curran?" asked a conceited prelate. "Nothing but the head, my lord," replied the brilliant orator. It is sad to think that fashions cannot go out without taking with them the pleasant sayings they suggested. The wigs of barristers were formerly manufactured of human hair profusely powdered, and it was an old reproach against a briefless advocate that he did not earn enough to powder his wig withal. The legal perruque is now unpowdered, and made not only of tow and horsehair, but also in some degree of pigs' bristles, so that a barrister who stands out obstinately for his client may be said to be pig-headed in more senses than one. (Attorneys using this pun without the author's permission will be prosecuted.)

It is satisfactory to observe that though ladies still affect the things called "pads," and wear other women's hair in unprecedented abundance, the hideous "chignon" has gone out. Let us hope that neither it nor the still more horrible "crinoline" will ever again be permitted to disfigure Englishwomen, by the consent of all nations under the sun the most beautiful women in the world. It is also a matter of felicitation that the mustard-headed ladies one used to meet so frequently a year or two ago are becoming much rarer. We might well dispense with them altogether, for surely it cannot be supposed that the flesh-tints, whether of a "blonde" or of a brunette, were ever meant by Nature to be associated with the yellow plumage of a canary.

Male attire undergoes but little improvement. Men seemed doomed to wear for ever the same cut of clothes, and the chimney-pot hat will probably disappear with the male head, but not before. That consummation, however, may come at no distant date, for men are among the things that are going out, while women, heaven be thanked! grow more numerous every day. Still we have the benefit of some minor modifications of costume, which contribute to our comfort, and for which we are therefore bound to be grateful. Fore most among these small reforms must be ranked the abolition of straps, stocks, and those villanous stand-up shirt collars, with which in by-gone times our ears were in continual danger of being sawed off. I was shocked to see a man with strapped trousers in Hayling Island some weeks ago, as I told you at the time; and once in a blue moon one encounters a gentleman with a stock, precisely similar to that still to be seen round the throat of a waxen figure in a shop opposite Day & Martin's blacking manufactory in Holborn; but the stand-up collar is still patronized by Mr. Gladstone and, in all probability, by him alone of living Englishmen. Surely, if a deputation from the wives and daughters of his Greenwich constituents were to wait upon him, and with tears in their eyes to entreat him to discard an article so injurious to his good-looks, he could not find it in his heart to refuse. One Quaker in a drab suit and a broad-brim, which neither Fox nor Barclay need have disdained to wear, may still be seen sauntering about Lothbury and Lombard Street; and a hatter on Tower Hill assured me the other day that there is a wealthy old merchant in Tower street who to this day wears a beaver hat, a blue body-coat, with brass buttons, and a buff waistcoat.

Shaving is going out gradually. The sooner it goes out altogether the better, for no more nonsensical or more injurious practice ever prevailed in a civilized country. "Zelim," says Lord Bacon, "was the first of the Ottomans that did shave his beard. A Bashaw asked him why he had altered the custom of his predecessors. He answered, 'Because you Bashaws may not lead me by the beard, as you did them.'" Zelim was some thing of a philosopher, and a trifle of a wag, but his logic, however pertinent in Turkey, has no force in England, where men would never suffer themselves to be led by their beards, though these beards were to grow to their waists. The day will assuredly come when posterity will stand aghast at the thought that their male ancestors could ever have been such simpletons as to take a sharp knife in their hands once every four-and-twenty hours and submit themselves to a tedious and painful operation, and all for what?—to make their faces look like the faces of women. A beard was given to a man at once for an ornament and a protection,—*decus atque tutamen*. To take it off were about as reasonable as to cut the mane off a lion,—a profitless and perilous experiment. But shaving is the last lingering remnant of the old cropping system, once prevalent from one end of the country to the other. Horses' tails, dogs' ears, and men's beards were alike remorselessly cropped, with the effect of disfiguring all three animals in a manner horrible to contemplate.

From horses to husbands the transition is possibly not very honorable to the former. The bearing-rein is going out, a fact which calls to mind my encounter with Mr. Beebumble the other day. I met him in Richmond Park, with a face as long as a fiddle. "Bless my heart,

Beebumble," I exclaimed, "what *is* the matter?" "Ah!" he replied, and so replying he made me cry, as you know he always does, by the force with which he wrings my hand, "Mrs. Beebumble has abolished the horse's bearing-rein. "And a good thing, too," I rejoined; "give the poor brute his head." "Ah! yes, my boy," he sighed, "that's all right enough, but when will she abolish *my* bearing-rein? When is a husband to have his head?" I was unable to answer.

RINKING.

THE fascination which wheels possess for the human imagination is assuredly one of the most wonderful mysteries of our nature; yet strange to say, it would seem to have escaped the notice of philosophers, ancient and modern. Neither Tacitus nor Tupper has made the faintest allusion to it; Mill, Carlyle, and Darwin, are alike silent upon the subject, but not so the poets. Poetry abounds in metaphorical references to this most marvellous affinity. We are all familiar with the wheel of fortune, and everybody knows that our life is a curious contrivance of wheels within wheels. We are, to speak figuratively, dragged at the chariot-wheels of Fashion, Love, or Beauty, as the case may be; and full many an ambitious man is, to use Dryden's simile, crushed "like the gasping charioteer beneath the wheel of his own car." "In the contemplation of our destinies," writes Lord Bacon, "look not too long upon the turning wheels of Vicissitude, lest we become giddy." Very pretty, too, is Pope's description of the flight of Mercury:—

"Then, wheeling down the steep of heaven he flies,
And draws a radiant circle o'er the skies."

Milton also turns the wheel to good poetical purpose in many a melodious verse, and to quote his own words, "He throws his flight in many an airy wheel." Very potent and dictatorial is the phrase as used by Shakespeare,—"And you, my myrmidons, mark what I say! Attend me where I wheel," an adjuration which would serve well for a motto upon a skating-rink. Now and then the moralist presses the metaphor into his service, as in Dr. South's consolatory meditation:—"According to the common vicissitude and *wheel* of things, the proud and the insolent, after long trampling upon others, come at length to be trampled upon themselves," which, by the way, is very right and proper, and altogether consonant with that law of compensation or retribution which one loves to observe, as well in the moral as in the material world.

These purely metaphorical uses of wheels do but give fanciful illustration to the physical sense of joy which wheels, and whatsoever runneth upon them, appear to create within us. Who has not remarked with satisfaction the radiant glee of the poor man's little child who may be trundled along the street in a wagon extemporized out of an old box, and with wheels of thrice the diameter of a crown-piece? Analyze in a philosophic spirit that child's delight, and you shall find that it is identical in its origin, though not in its concomitants, with the pleasure which a lady derives from riding through Hyde Park or along Regent Street in her sumptuous brougham.

"Through the proud street she moves, the public gaze;
The turning wheel before the palace stays."

Cowley paints a pleasant picture of a lady in her carriage :—

> "Where never yet did pry
> The busy morning's curious eye,
> The wheels of thy bold coach pass quick and free,
> And all's an open road to thee."

There is manifestly, for young and old, for gentle and simple, something exhiliarating and delightful in rotary movement. Hence the pleasure one finds not only in riding on, but even in gazing at, the spruce equipages of the Four-in-hand Club in Rotten Row, and the splendid coaches which dash off in such gallant style from the White Horse Cellars in Piccadilly. Hence, too, in a great measure is drawn the satisfaction one experiences in travelling by express train. For lookers-on also there is a strange fascination in the very sight of the wheels whirling round upon the axles with dazzling celerity. It is nice to be rolled even in a wheelbarrow; how much nicer must it be to take your ease in a Pullman car, while you speed along at the rate of a mile a minute or so! To the same wonderful predilection for wheels and wheeling, or being wheeled, is to be ascribed the joy that some people find in gliding swiftly upon a bycicle, at the imminent risk of breaking their necks,—*imbéciles à deux roues!*

The rink mania is the newest and certainly not the least singular development of that rage for wheels which is unquestionably one of the strangest and strongest passions of the human heart. A superficial visitor, unversed in the ways of philosophy, and unobservant of the curious springs of action animating human heads and heels, might, on entering a rink for the first time,

find it no easy matter to understand why so many of his fellow-creatures, mercifully qualified by nature to move safely and pleasantly upon the soles of their feet, should prefer to run about upon castors, like tables and chairs. Such a reflection, however, could only redound to the discredit of the shallow brain from which it emanated, the connection between wheels and humanity being, as already shown, as old as the hills, or, indeed, as the valleys either, for the matter of that. Rinking is a graceful and brilliant accomplishment, which, based upon an irresistible instinct of our being, tends to elevate and refine all who do not lose either life or limb while engaged in the acquisition of it. Moreover, it may be said of it with perfect propriety that it gives softness and tenderness to the manners, making the votaries of the art benignly considerate of the comfort and convenience of their fellow-creatures. A Rink is the very palace of courtesy, and it is as wonderful as edifying to observe how polite people are to one another within the precincts of its magical circle. *Emollit mores.* That spiteful satisfaction at the disasters of their neighbors from which the best-conducted persons are not wholly free, in other places, appears to be quite unknown to the *habitués* of the Rink. Companionship in danger teaches mutual forbearance, and quells so effectually the dictates of ill-nature, that not a sneer distorts the faces of any of his or her associates, nor does one word of inhuman jubilation escape from their lips when a Rinker comes to grief. Nobody laughs, nobody jeers, everybody runs to his or her assistance, and everybody seems sorry for him or her, as the case may be. I saw a very fat gentleman come a fearful "cropper" the other day. Swift as meditation or the thoughts of love, I

sped to his aid, and I have no doubt that I should have rendered him essential service, had it not been that in trying to get at him, I tumbled heels over head myself, and have never been to say altogether right in my mind since.

Some delightful writer has remarked that so evanescent are the conditions of our earthly pilgrimage, that "a smile and a clasp of the hand as we pass," is the most we can hope to have of one another here below. Nowhere are these sad words truer than at a Skating-rink. It is touch-and-go with every one. If you mean to propose for a young lady in a rink, you would do well to come to the point as expeditiously as possible, while you and she are still able to maintain a perpendicular attitude. "Before I am run away with by my feelings, allow me to inquire, my dear young lady, what is your fortune?" So speaks a very prudent and pious parson in one of Miss Austen's novels. For "feelings" read "castors," and the question may be recommended for the use of sentimental swains, making love in Mr. Plimpton's skates. It is delightful to observe what flirtation goes on in these places, and how successful young people seem to be in rinking into one another's affections. Very touching, too, is it to remark how gallantly solicitous are the young men for the safety of the young women, even when both are moving at a quiet pace, and with an ease and confidence which forbids the thought of peril. On such occasions it is no uncommon thing to see a male arm encircling a female waist, with an air of anxiety and a tenacity of pressure apparently in excess of the necessity, but still enchanting to behold. We sometimes witness the same sort of thing upon real ice, when it may be said with perfect truth of the skaters,

"Nimbly, gayly, off they go,
With sport above and death below;"

but I really do think that all that is noble, generous, and intrepid in the male heart comes out in still more captivating colors in the Rink, the devotion of the male to the female sex being there worthy of the best days of chivalry. There is another consideration which ought to recommend rinking to the cordial approval of all thoughtful and benevolent persons,—I mean the service it cannot fail to render to surgical art. This is in itself a matter of primary importance. When rinkers, familiar with danger, and therefore contemptuous of it, shall grow even more reckless in their proceedings than they are at present, the number of sprained wrists, dislocated ankles, broken legs and arms, and smashed heads will become so great, that a staff of surgeons will have to be in constant attendance at every Rink. The profession will thus gain very considerably, not alone in a pecuniary sense, but also in opportunities of practice, for it stands to reason that if people did not break their limbs, surgeons would never know how to set them. For one good male rinker there at least forty female. The men are often as awkward as they are inelegant, and so come frequently to confusion; whereas the women are, generally speaking, so prudent and skilful, as well as graceful, that they rarely give occasion for the doctor's intervention. Thus in this, as in all other matters, the advantage is where it ought to be,—with the better and more beautiful section of humanity.

Another admirable thing about rinking is that it quickens the pulses of poetic inspiration. I was at a rink the other day, and all of a sudden such an afflatus, direct from the sunniest eminences of Parnassus, came

over me, that I asked Mr. Hayes, the courteous proprietor, to oblige me with writing materials. He did so, with characteristic politeness. Nay, more, he spread a round table for me right in the middle of the rink, whereat he placed a chair. I sat me down, and while the skaters were spinning around me on all sides in frantic mazes, I produced the following sublime

SONG OF THE RINKERS.

I.

Hearken to the Rinkers rolling round the rink;
How their axles clatter! how their castors clink!
Wheeling in a giddy maze, darting in and out,
They're "circular" and "fugitive" beyond the range of doubt.

CHORUS.

Sing a song of Rinkers, how merrily they skim!
Birds were made for flying, and fish were made to swim;
Now we've found the motion fit for human kind,—
Man to roll on castors only was designed.

II

Here and there and everywhere, in and out they dash,
Rinking's most delightful when there comes a crash;
Sympathy is catching: when Fanny's boot's unlaced,
Willie's arm encircles his Arabella's waist.

CHORUS.—Sing a song of Rinkers, etc.

III.

Gliding o'er the asphalte at a furious rate,
Taking it for ice, too, fancying they skate!
With each other flirting, waggishly they wink;
Oh, the rosy rinkers rolling round the rink!

CHORUS.—Sing a song of Rinkers, etc.

IV.

In the day of danger, when the clouds arise,
Darkening all your sunshine, shrouding all your skies,
Never take to weeping, never pause to think,
Buckle on your castors, and begin to rink.

CHORUS.—Sing a song of Rinkers, etc.

THE POETRY OF SLEEP.

"I WOULD go fifty miles on foot, for I have not a horse worth riding on, to kiss the hand of that man whose generous heart will give up the reins of his imagination into his author hands—be pleased he knows not why and cares not wherefore." So spake Lawrence Sterne; and knowing thee, reader, to be just such a man as he thus eloquently depicts, I kiss thy dear hand, and taking it in mine, propose that we shall have an "out and about" in dreamland, chatting cosily as we go, on a subject the most attractive in the world—Sleep. All that the human fancy can conceive of refreshing and delightful is assuredly comprised in that gentle monosyllable. Dr. Johnson's definition is sufficiently seductive. "To Sleep—to take rest by the suspension of the mental and corporal powers." What can be more delicious? Poets in all ages have sung the praises of sleep; but of all panegyrics ever uttered on the enchanting theme, the most truthful and striking is probably that which fell from the inspired lips of Sancho Panza:—"Now blessings light on him who first invented sleep!" It covers a man all over, thoughts and

all, like a cloak. It is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, and cold for the hot." So, indeed, it is ; and he who possesses it to the fullest in the night is to be envied, however bleak and rough his journey may have been in the day. And if that man be worthy of universal benediction, as unquestionably he is, who "invented" sleep, surely he who gives to that exquisite discovery the utmost possible development is also to be esteemed a benefactor of his race. He may not, indeed, lay claim to the honors of originality, but he deserves such secondary praise as fairly belongs to those ingenious and philanthropic minds which are modestly content to elaborate to finer perfection and make more easy of operation the projects of inventive genius. In that happy thought I find supreme comfort. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to know that these essays of mine are soporific in their effect—that they have an irresistible tendency to produce sleep, and so to procure for the reader the very highest form of enjoyment of which human nature is capable. Some pens there are which stir the spirit of man like trumpets ; some pens may be compared to swords, slaying right and left and flashing dazzlingly in the sunshine ; others may be likened to reeds which shed music ; mine has but one parallel—the sleep-compelling word of Somnus. What is the use of exciting people ? what possible good can come of writing in such a strain and style that men's cheeks flush to a more crimson dye, and their hearts beat more rapidly, and their pulses throb more wildly as they read ? As though there were not enough to distract and worry them in their experiences of every-day life ! Be it mine to soothe them into serene repose, and gently to beguile

them into such sweet oblivion of sorrow as it is in the power of sleep, and of sleep alone, to bestow. The proudest and happiest moment of my life is when I see a man take up a book of mine and set himself down to a perusal of it. Full well I know that "not poppy nor mandragora nor all the drowsy syrups of the world" can ever medicine him to such sweet sleep as is now in store for him. Being of a benevolent disposition, to administer to the felicity of my fellow creature is ever my chief delight. And what a glorious opportunity now presents itself! Placing myself in a position where I may see without being seen, it is my practice to mark with breathless attention the working of my spell upon my unsuspecting reader; to observe how "the exposition of sleep," as Bottom phrases it, comes gradually over him; to see his muscles insensibly relaxing, his eyelids drooping, his head nodding as he reads, till at last he sinks back unconsciously in his chair, the volume drops from his hands, and the voice or rather the nose of the snorer resounds jubilantly through the room. The delightful thought that I have made a human being supremely blest, banished his cares, and transported him by the magic of my writing to an ideal world, where he may smile to think of the grief in this, fills me with triumphant joy. All the way home I keep repeating these lines of Ovid to the unspeakable amazement of the passers-by, who little dream what noble transport swells my breast:—

> "Somne quies rerum, placidissime somne deorum,
> Pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corpora diurnis
> Fessa ministeriis mulces, reparasque labori."

Sleepless myself, I write that you may sleep, and so, dear reader, I acquire an undeniable title to your grat-

itude and admiration. I have always been of opinion that there are in poetic literature two personages who receive at the hands of society treatment the very reverse of that to which they are justly entitled. They were both called into creation by Dr. Isaac Watts. The one is the little busy bee, whom we are exhorted from earliest infancy to admire, forgetful of his horrid buzz and his bitter sting, and his felonious conduct in perpetually stealing the honey from the flowers; the other is the sluggard, who, if he do no good, at all events does no harm, but who, nevertheless, is invariably held up as an object of hatred and derision.

> "Tis the voice of the sluggard, I heard him complain
> You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again."

Certainly! By all means? Why not? Why should he not slumber again? Why was he waked too soon? Why should any man be waked too soon? or waked at all for the matter of that! Every man is entitled to his due measure of sleep, and nothing can be more unfair than to bully a fellow out of this delicious heritage. To rob a poor man of his beer is bad enough; to rob him of his sleep is still worse; and to turn him into ridicule because he "complains" of such treatment is to add insult to injury. Of all the inhuman contrivances ever invented by the wicked ingenuity of man for his own discomfort and that of his fellow-creatures, the most inhuman was that horrid bed exhibited some years ago at the first great bazaar in Hyde Park, and which was so constructed that at five o'clock in the morning it chucked the sleeper out of the mattrass right into the middle of the floor. The only parallel for this atrocious invention was perhaps that designed by the learned

Mrs. Carter, which was so adjusted in its devilish mechanism that at a certain hour it set light to a string to which a heavy weight was suspended, which then fell with a strong sudden noise. "This," said Dr. Johnson, "roused her from her sleep, and then she had no difficulty in getting up." The woman who could manufacture such an instrument would eat her own children like Saturn. Sleep is in truth our most precious right, our sweetest prerogative, and it is precious and sweet in the precise proportion that life is charged with sorrows and solicitudes, which would be intolerable but for the soft repose and mild nepenthe of periodic slumber. The most blissful reminiscence of youth is the memory of its sleep—sleep not fragmentary or uneasy, subject to no painful vision or distressing dream, but sleep worthy of the name, hearty, continuous, profound, and chequered only by such sweet and gentle revelations of some better world as give to slumber a divine zest, a tranquil holy joy unknown in after years, even to the most blameless lives. The sleep of infancy is a heavenly trance, delightful to behold. What serenity is there on the brow of a sleeping infant! what suavity of expression is there about the mouth! and how peaceful and regular is the heaving of the tiny breast. In the world of external nature the most exact analogies for the ecstatic repose of childhood are, perhaps, the throbless tide of a summer sea in southern latitudes, the stillness of an autumnal wood when the winds are hushed and the aspens cease to quiver, or the meek waveless glow of moonlight on a bank. "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!" says Shakespeare with matchless grace of diction. There is high poetic beauty in the notion—let us not call it superstition—that the smile of a sleep-

ing infant is the child's response to the whispering of an angel. Boys and girls go in for sleep with a will and enjoy it keenly. Oh! for the glorious days, or rather nights, when to go to bed meant of necessity to go to sleep, and when no sooner had the golden-tressed head touched the pillow than the little votary of Morpheus was wrapped in Elysian repose. Sleep such as this is the special privilege of youth, and rarely comes to us in our mature years. One of many arguments in favor of a country life is that it is eminently conducive to good sleep. Open air exercise, whether obtained through the instrumentality of manual toil or in pursuit of field sports, produces sleep sounder and more genuine than usually falls to the lot of the harassed denizens of great towns. What with hard labor and hard pleasure, worry everlasting and endless anxiety, and all the bother, pother, uproar and annoyance that the fiend "Business" brings in his train, to say nothing of the row in the streets and the tumult and turbulence raging on all hands, the wonder is that the majority of Londoners are able to sleep at all. For six days in the week the world jogs along at a drowsy pace in the country, and on the seventh day the village parson—purveyor-general of sleep for the whole parish— gets into his pulpit and scatters sleep right and left throughout his rural flock. Very pungent, indeed, was the remark of the old Scotchwoman, who, when advised by her minister to take snuff with her to keep her awake in kirk while he was preaching, replied "Why dinna you put the snuff in the sermon, mon?" Happily for his congregation he had no "snuff," to put in, so he followed his own hum-drum course and still as ever sent his hearers away invigorated with a more delightful form of refreshment than it is in the power of

the most impassioned orator to bestow. One of the most poetic accompaniments of sleep is snoring, a graceful and melodious art of which, strange to say, most people are ashamed. I know a man who snores much better than he sings, yet he is much prouder of the latter than of the former accomplishment. His wife has invented an exquisite little apparatus for his special use. At the base of each nostril is fastened a perforated ivory plate to which is affixed an India-rubber tube terminating in an ivory pipe. This pipe is placed in the mouth of the snorer, who thus consumes his own snores.

It is interesting to observe what a potent effect the theme "Sleep" has in brightening and accelerating poetic thought. The moment a poet begins to write upon this drowsy matter he waxes eloquent. Edward Young, a very unequal writer on general subjects, is uniformly sublime when he treats of sleep. No sooner does he touch on this ambrosial topic than he reaches at a bound something like Shakespearian splendor of imagination. His thoughts acquire new brilliancy, and his language grows prismatic. How fine in fancy and how exquisite in expression are these lines :—

> "Night, sable goddess, from her ebon throne,
> In rayless majesty now stretches forth
> Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world."

Shakespeare himself is never more magnificent than in speaking on this question. Some of his grandest passages relate to it. What can be more touching than the lamentation of Macbeth that, in having committed a dread crime, he had forfeited for evermore his right to sleep :—

"Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more.
Macbeth does murder sleep'—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath;
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast."

In striking contrast with this mournful meditation upon his own lot, is the murderer's allusion to the peace enjoyed by his victim, Duncan, in the grave. "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well." Not less tender is King Henry's famous adjuration to sleep. Never surely, was reproach couched in language more poignantly pathetic :—

"Sleep, gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
O, thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile
In loathsome beds; and leavest the kingly couch.
A watch-case, or a common 'larum bell?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge;
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deafening clamours in the slippery cloud,
That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?
Canst thou, O partial sleep! give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;
And in the calmest and most stillest night
Deny it to a king?"

The marvellous similitude of life itself to a vision and of death to sleep, is a thought which appears to have possessed a peculiar fascination for all poets, but

more particularly for Shakespere, whom it always prompts to utterances of more than ordinary sublimity. With this sublimity is mingled a touch of simple pathos which strikes home to every heart; as, for example, in the saying, "Tired we sleep, and life's poor play is o'er!" And in that saddest, most tragic, of all reflections, "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." Coleridge rises to a strain of antique eloquence in discoursing about sleep, and of all stanzas in "The Ancient Mariner," probably the most melodious is this:—

> "Oh, sleep it is a gentle thing,
> Beloved from pole to pole;
> To Mary Queen the praise be given,
> She sent the blessed sleep from heaven
> That slid into my soul."

What quaint significance there is in that old preterite "slid," and how happily does the word express the soft and noiseless access of slumber! Among contemporaneous bards Longfellow excels in allusions to sleep. There are few passages prettier or more pathetic than the following:—

> "Oh, holy Sleep, from thee I learn to bear
> What men have borne before;
> Thou layst thy finger on the lips of care
> And they complain no more!"

Against this placid, comfortable meditation may be set Young's passionate complaint, that Sleep,

> "Like the world her ready visit pays
> Where Fortune smiles; the wretched she forsakes.
> Swift on her downy pinion flies from care
> And lights on lids unsullied by a tear."

It is to be feared that the experience of the grief-stricken is in favor of this view of the case, and that Sleep and Sorrow are but rarely found in the same bed. Anyhow, there is a placid charm in Longfellow's theory, and but that allegory is dead and realism has well-nigh killed the poetic and imaginative in art, his verse might serve for the text of a fine picture. In classic literature, rich as it is in tender sentiments respecting death and its counterfeit—sleep—I do not remember to have found anything more beautiful than this saying of a Greek poet: "Wrapped in a heavenly slumber, O say not the good can die!" A great volume might be filled with the sayings of bards—ancient and modern—about sleep; but of all words ever penned on the subject, the most sublime are assuredly those of King David—"He giveth His beloved sleep," a thought of such ineffable beauty and eloquence, so rich in celestial significance and consolatory assurance, that there is no going beyond it.

THE END.

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